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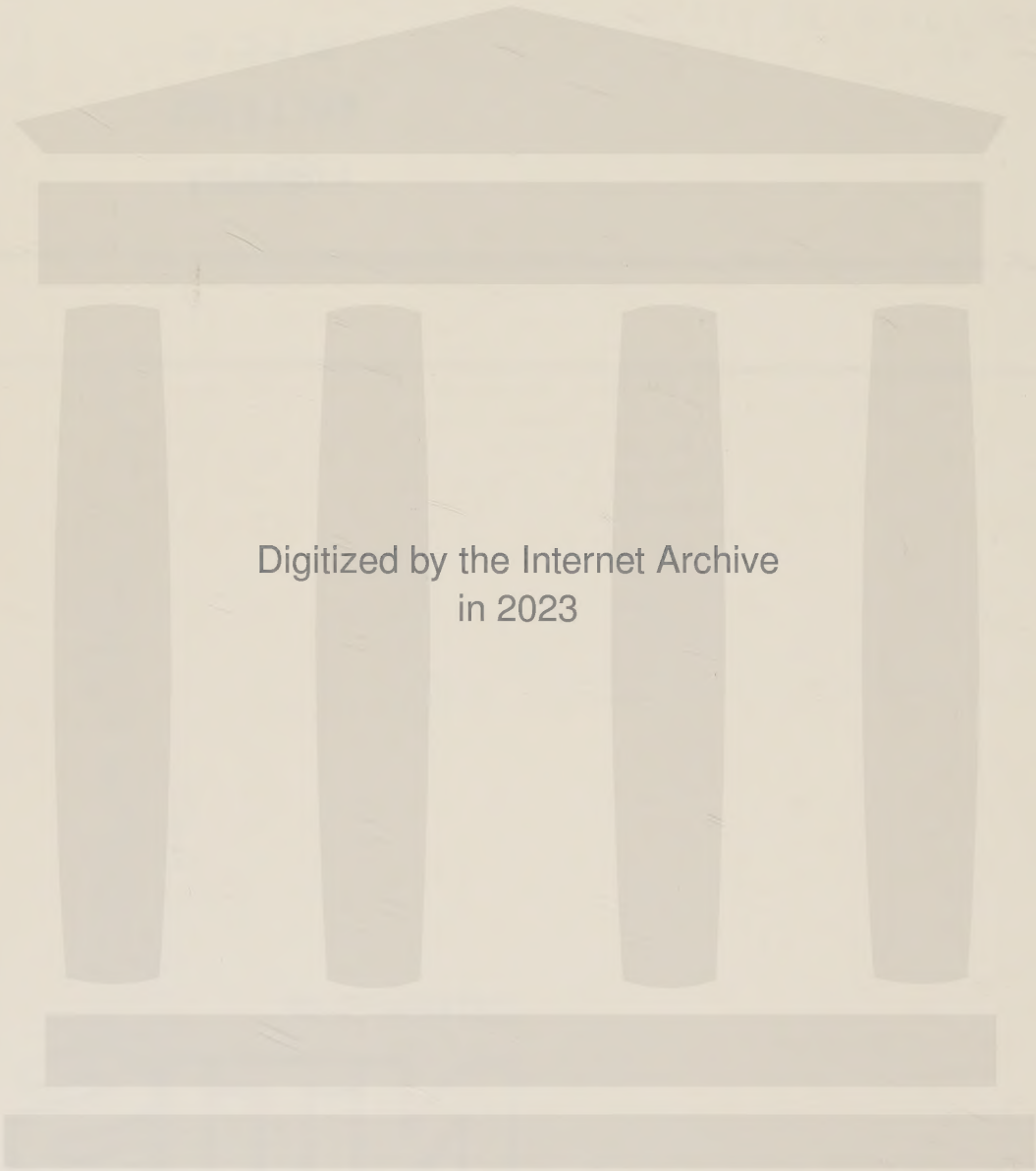

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Empress Wu Tse-t'ien

- first of a series of articles selected from "Talks on the History of the Confucian-Legalist Struggle"

by

Hu Shen-sheng (胡申生), Feng Tan-feng (冯丹枫)
and Huang Lung-chen (黄尤珍)

(Hsüeh-hsi yü P'i-p'an [Study and Criticism], No. 1, January 10, 1975)

"When Wu Tse-t'ien became empress, who would dare say 'men are superior and women are inferior'?" So said the great revolutionary Lu Hsün in a high appraisal of Empress Wu in Chinese history.

Wu Tse-t'ien (624-705 A.D.), whose name was Chao, was born into a poor ordinary family. At the age of 14, she was taken by Emperor T'ai Tsung of T'ang, Li Shih-min, as an imperial concubine. When T'ai Tsung died, she became a nun. In 654, she was recalled to the palace by T'ang Kao Tsung, Li Chih, and was appointed a court official. The following year she was installed as queen. In 690, she ascended the throne as empress. Wu Tse-t'ien was a Legalist power holder supported by the plebeian landlord clique in the early T'ang Dynasty. In the nearly half a century of her rule, she had consistently pursued a Legalist line and, for this, was consistently opposed by the diehard forces of the big landlords. Wu Tse-t'ien was an outstanding woman politician who revered the Legalist school and opposed Confucianism, one who grew up in the midst of the acute struggle between the Confucian and Legalist lines.

T'ang T'ai Tsung, Li Shih-min, who pushed a Legalist line, died in 649 A.D. While he was on the throne, he had adopted a number of measures against the big landlord forces of the official class, but in this respect he did not do it thoroughly and, in particular, he not only failed to strike at those Kuanlung nobles who joined the Li Yüan uprisings but, on the contrary, relied on some of them. Therefore, when the young Kao Tsung, Li Chih, succeeded to the throne, this group of big landlord diehards jumped at the opportunity and vainly attempted to alter T'ang T'ai Tsung's Legalist line and restore the political monopoly of the big landlords of the official class. Thus, an extremely sharp struggle was unfolded between the plebeian landlords and the big landlord clique represented by the Kuanlung nobles around the question of whether it was necessary to continue to establish and consolidate the rule of the plebeian landlords.

T'ang Kao Tsung, Li Chih, a man described in history as "uninterested in Confucianism but having a high regard for the study of literature and history," was an emperor who was inclined to honor the Legalist school and oppose Confucianism. In the first few years of his administration, big power was in the main held in the hands of the noble relative of the royal family, Ch'angsun Wu-chi, the fun-loving old

minister Ch'u Sui-liang and others. Breathing from the same nostrils as Queen Wang, who came from the powerful aristocracy, these people formed a formidable conservative force within the imperial court. In order to break the monopoly of court affairs by the powerful official class and to continue T'ang T'ai Tsung's Legalist line, T'ang Kao Tsung was earnest in his quest for a good assistant and naturally he was attracted to Wu Tse-t'ien, who "was not only resourceful but also well versed in literature and history." With the support of the representatives of the plebeian landlords such as Li Chi, Hsü Ching-tsung and Li I-fu, Kao Tsung decided to divorce Queen Wang and install Wu Tse-t'ien as queen. This decision caused a big storm in the court, for the conservative clique of the official big landlords realized that the departure of Queen Wang would be a bad enough omen but the installation of Wu Tse-t'ien, who was of humble origin, as queen would pose an even more serious threat to them. So, they stealthily gathered together to "discuss the matter privately" and lamented that a major disaster "will certainly begin from here." After careful deliberations, they decided to come out in full force and, regardless of any consequences, beseech Kao Tsung, "on pain of death," not to install Wu Tse-t'ien as queen.

That day, the atmosphere in the inner chamber of the court was different from what it used to be, with "swords drawn and bows stretched taut." A group of big landlord diehards headed by Ch'angsun Wu-chi and Ch'u Sui-liang, dwelling on the hackneyed concept of family standing, told Kao Tsung: Queen Wang came from a "well-known family" and "should not be divorced lightly"; and "if Your Majesty must change your queen, choose one from your relatives. Why Wu?" When they talked about "well-known family" and "relatives," these people had one aim in mind: Do not install Wu Tse-t'ien, "a woman of humble origin," as queen! In order to attain this aim, the backbone element of the diehard clique, Han Yüan, deriding the present with the past in the court, openly likened Wu Tse-t'ien to Ta Chi [a notorious concubine] of the Yin-Shang period and to Pao Szu of Western Chou. Viciously cursing Wu Tse-t'ien as the source of national subjugation, he said threateningly: If Wu Tse-t'ien were made queen, the T'ang Dynasty would soon perish. When Ch'u Sui-liang, the chieftain of the diehard clique, saw that the tongue could not prevail, he abruptly "threw himself to the floor and knocked his head against the ground until it bled," threatening Kao Tsung with resignation, yelling loudly: "I wish to return to Your Majesty my tablet and beg you to allow me to return home." Faced with the arrogant conservative forces, Li Chi, Hsü Ching-tsung and other representatives of the plebeian landlords immediately administered a strong rebuff and questioned these fellows loudly: When the Son of Heaven wishes to change his queen, "that is none of your business. Why must you object?" With the support of Li Chi and others, Kao Tsung, ignoring the opposition of the big landlord diehards, determinedly issued an edict divorcing Queen Wang and making her a commoner and formally installing Wu Tse-t'ien as queen. Thus, in the midst of this violent struggle between the Confucians and the Legalists Wu Tse-t'ien mounted the political stage in great strides.

As Engels pointed out, for the kings, dukes and nobles in the feudal society "marriage is a political act according an opportunity to expand one's influence by a new marriage alliance." The installation of Wu Tse-t'ien as queen was definitely not, as absurdly described by the reactionary Confucian scholars, the result of the fact that "she was jealous of others and refused to concede to anyone," but was a political incident, a serious struggle between the Confucians and the Legalists, and an indication of the triumph of the plebeian landlord reformists over the big landlord conservative forces of the official class. Because of this, after Wu Tse-t'ien became queen, far from indulging in a luxurious palatial life, she actively assisted Kao Tsung in handling state affairs, becoming his capable political assistant. Particularly after Kao Tsung entrusted her with "the care of state affairs," she toiled even more vigorously to put the state apparatus on a more efficient basis. While pushing a Legalist line of persisting in reform and opposing regression, she continued her uncompromising struggle with the big landlord diehards headed by Ch'angsun Wu-chi and Ch'u Sui-liang. She successively dismissed or demoted more than 20 big bureaucrats including Ch'u Sui-liang, caused the conceited and arrogant Ch'angsun Wu-chi to kill himself, and dealt strong blows to the big landlord clique of the official class, becoming as she did the supreme political representative of the plebeian landlord clique and winning the glorious title of "sage-queen."

However, all "decaying things do not die easily, they struggle for their own survival and persist in their own decadent cause." During the period of Wu Tse-t'ien rule, the big landlord diehards bitterly resented her Legalist line. They either planned secretly in dark corners or spread rumors among the populace, biding their time to strike. In 683 A.D., T'ang Kao Tsung died of illness. Thinking that Heaven had presented them with a golden opportunity which must not be missed, these diehard elements formed a reactionary alliance headed by Hsü Ching-yeh, the Duke of Ying (Ying Kung) and P'ei Yen, the Court Secretary-General (Chung Shu Ling) and openly hoisted the banner of rebellion in a a vain attempt to overthrow overnight, from within and without, the plebeian landlord regime represented by Wu Tse-t'ien. At this time, the Confucian-Legalist struggle entered upon a still more acute stage.

A careerist, Hsü Ching-yeh had been severely punished by Wu Tse-T'ien for his violation of the law. But, instead of repenting, he "complained about his dismissal and plotted a revolt." He recruited a group of social misfits and reactionary Confucian scholars as his followers, and while, on the one hand, he drove prisoners and masons to join the army in order to rig up a reactionary armed force, on the other hand, he maintained contact with the conspirator P'ei Yen, who held an important position in the central government and who would respond from within, and staged a large-scale armed revolt in Yangchou. In addition, he hired writers to cook up a "declaration in denunciation of Wu Chao," concocting charges against Wu Tse-t'ien and uttering the wild cry: "look at the world of today, whose family does it belong to?" They could not have been more arrogant and frantic.

Outside the city smoke and dust were in the air. Inside the imperial court, the Confucians and the Legalists were clearly divided in their attitudes toward Hsü Ching-yeh's armed revolt. Resolutely defending the cause of unification were the reformers representing the interests of the plebeian landlords. Filled with righteous indignation, they asked Wu Tse-t'ien to take prompt action and despatch a big army to put down the revolt. On the other hand, the big landlord diehards headed by P'ei Yen spread rumors inside the imperial court, added fuel to the fire and acted in concert with Hsü Ching-yeh from within. The conspirator P'ei Yen pretended to obey the orders of Wu Tse-t'ien while secretly harboring evil designs. When Hsü Ching-yeh revolted with his force, he /P'ei/ miscalculated the situation, thinking that Wu Tse-t'ien would surely be caught off guard. So, he went to battle stripped to the waist and openly forced Wu Tse-t'ien to step down. Indeed, greed had made him confused. Faced with the two-pronged attacks by the reactionary forces both from inside and outside the court, Wu Tse-t'ien stood erect with her head held high and was as calm as ever. With the powerful support of the plebeian landlord clique, she quickly found out the truth about the revolt and ferreted out the P'ei Yen counter-revolutionary conspiratorial clique. P'ei Yen, an agent of the big landlords of the official class, was tried and summarily executed, his head hung in the public square. After that, she personally mapped out the strategy and tactics for counter-attacking the insurgent forces and sent out an army of 300,000 men under general Li Hsiao-i to "march south," heading with irresistible force toward Hsü Ching-yeh's rebel stronghold. As a result, this armed rebellion, carefully planned by Hsü Ching-yeh and P'ei Yen, lasted little more than 50 days before it was totally crushed by the big army sent by Wu Tse-t'ien. The rebel chieftain Hsü Ching-yeh, like P'ei Yen, died a completely discredited man.

Although the rebels, Hsü Ching-yeh, P'ei Yen and the like, looked very powerful for a time, yet because they pushed a Confucian line of division and regression, they were moving against the tide of history and were therefore bound to be weak and short-lived. But the Wu Tse-t'ien administration which carried out the Legalist line was able to "maintain tranquility within the four seas," with central authority further consolidated.

But although the armed revolt by Hsü Ching-yeh and P'ei Yen was quelled, the struggle did not come to an end. With a view to developing the excellent situation surrounding the exercise of power by the plebeian landlords and to further carrying out reforms throughout the country, Wu Tse-t'ien did not hesitate to break the net of feudal rites and ethics and depose the ignorant and incompetent T'ang Jui Tsung, Li Tan. In 690 A.D., she ascended the throne as empress and changed the name of the dynasty from T'ang to Chou, giving herself the title "Shensheng Huangti" (神聖皇帝 the holy empress). Wu Tse-t'ien's enthronement was a major mark of the triumph of the plebeian landlords over the landlords of the official class, of the reform clique over the conservative diehard forces. The fact that a woman dared to ascend the throne was itself a forceful criticism of the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius.

The establishment of the Wu Chou regime enjoyed enthusiastic support from the plebeian landlords, with more than 60,000 persons signing a petition expressing support for Wu Tse-t'ien's ascension to the throne as empress. Therefore, the regime had a broad social foundation. But it was bitterly hated by the Confucians, the disciples of Confucius and Mencius and the big landlord diehards. In spite of the fact that they had suffered one serious blow after another from the reformers of the plebeian landlords, they kept trying to stir up trouble. Resorting to the vilest of language to abuse Wu Tse-t'ien, they described her ascension to the throne as a "derision of the past." They attacked her for being "tyrannical and frivolous" and "meting out punishment on her own whim." Moreover, they "secretly wooed government officials" and formed gangs everywhere in an attempt to strangle the newly-born Wu Chou regime. After calling herself empress, however, Wu Tse-t'ien refused to concede even half a step to the big landlord clique and went all out to implement the rule of law, "ruling the world with the handle of reward and punishment." She utilized the centralized state power to severely suppress the 36 "well-known personages within the four seas" including the prime minister Li Yüan-su and Li Yüan-heng. The result was that "more than a thousand of her opponents had to go into hiding." This once again thwarted the conspiracies of the conservatives. On the basis of a series of victories won by the plebeian landlord reformers in their struggle against the big landlord clique of the official class, Wu Tse-t'ien continued to vigorously push the Legalist line in all spheres - political, economic, ideological and cultural.

The organizational line is the guarantee for the execution of the political line. In order to have the Legalist line fully implemented over the breadth and length of the country, Wu Tse-t'ien took the first step of energetically fostering the middle and small landlord forces and expanding the ruling influence of the plebeian landlords through various channels. She gave the order for the revision of the "Register of Surnames" - the principal basis for determining people's social status at that time, and stipulated that the large number of plebeian landlords might acquire a very high social status by virtue of military merit or government service. Besides, adopting the method of selecting officials on the basis of examinations, she did her utmost to promote people among the plebeian landlords to be officials. She decreed that officials above the ninth rank or even the common people might recommend themselves for promotions or for appointments, and initiated the systems of holding written examinations in the palace and martial art contests. She boldly promoted a large group of officials who came from among the plebeian landlords of the lower social strata to important posts. This method of selecting and promoting officials regardless of family standing was highly resented by the big landlord clique of the official class, and in their memorials they attacked Wu Tse-t'ien's line of employing people, saying absurdly that "people are now employed without being really tested" and "as a consequence, civil officials are corrupt and military officers are ignorant and weak." They openly demanded that Wu Tse-t'ien restore the system of "fairly appointing officials of the nine grades" instituted

since the Han and Wei dynasties. But Wu Tse-t'ien paid no heed at all to these attacks of the big landlord clique and firmly carried out, as before, the Legalist line of employing people. Instantly, there was quickly formed around her a group of outstanding characters with Legalist inclinations who were later to make important contributions to consolidating the centralization of state power and insuring the unification of the country. Among these men were Ti Jen-chieh, Chang Chien-chih, Yao Ch'ung and Sung Ching.

In order to further restrain and supervise the diehard conservative forces and to strictly prevent subversion of central authority, Wu Tse-t'ien also adopted reform measures to invite opinions from the public. She installed a "copper box" in the court for the collection of letters of complaints and suggestions so that "people in the empire may secretly report to her." She also installed a drum in the court so that anyone with vital information might enter the court directly and beat the drum to make her come out to receive him. All travelling expenses would be borne by the government. Those who performed merit would also be rewarded. These measures taken by Wu Tse-t'ien had a definite effect on curbing the rebellious and usurping activities of the big bureaucratic and big landlord reactionary forces.

"With equal spread of dew and frost soil is improved; with wind and rain crops emerge from the earth." These two lines were written by Wu Tse-t'ien to sing the praises of the land equalization system. Economically, she took the view that "when people engage in farming, the land is put to the plow; when the land is put to the plow, more grain can be grown; when more grain is grown, people become rich." She attached the same importance to agriculture as other Legalists in history. She resolutely defended the system of land equalization enforced in the early T'ang Dynasty, prevented the big landlords from large-scale land annexations, and protected the interests of landlords in general. During the period of her rule, there was greater development in the social economy than before, with the total number of households in the country rising from 3,800,000 to 6,150,000. On the question of external affairs, she firmly resisted the armed harassments from the nobles such as the T'u-fans (Tibetans), Chitans and the Turks, recovered the four towns of Anhsi including Suiyeh (northwest of Lake Issyk-kul in Central Asia), and set up the Anhsi military command headquarters in Kueitzu, thereby consolidating the border defense in the Northwest and re-opening the commercial route to Central Asia that had once been interrupted.

One of the especially outstanding Legalist reform measures adopted by Wu Tse-t'ien was to raise the social status of women. She initiated a system of examination for women and allowed women who passed such tests to enter the palace in groups of three and five to attend state banquets. Although this could not change the substance of the feudal system and although the ordinary working women could not possibly enjoy this right, the appearance of women at state banquets was itself a forceful negation of the teaching that "distinction between men and women is one of the big regulations of the state." When Wu Tse-t'ien

held the reins of power, women were appointed to the fourth or fifth ranks in government service, and although this could not give women any real power, nevertheless objectively it raised women's social position to a certain degree.

On the ideological and political front, Wu Tse-t'ien had nothing but contempt for the reactionary Confucians who represented the interests of the big landlord clique. In political affairs, she "refrained from seeking the advice of the Confucians," and "most of her advisers were not Confucian scholars." This brought about the situation in which "the laws of the early kings were discarded and not mentioned." Wei Szu-li, the high-ranking minister who worshipped Confucianism, had in his memorial to Wu Tse-t'ien lamented that "for more than 20 years since the time of Yungch'un, the state has been paralyzed for lack of men of real learning. Officials versed in Confucian teachings are slighted, and the classics are abandoned." He also insulted those, represented by Wu Tse-t'ien, who honored the Legalist school, by saying that "if they believe in violence, how can they act honestly?" He asked Wu Tse-t'ien to give up the Legalist line, "respect and learn from the Confucians, commend and reward them." But Wu Tse-t'ien turned a deaf ear to him and continued to deal heavy blows to the followers of Confucius and Mencius and firmly carried out the Legalist line.

The various reform measures adopted by Wu Tse-t'ien reflected the interests of the plebeian landlord reformist clique and dealt stunning blows to the conservative forces of the landlords of the official class. Wu Tse-t'ien far surpassed T'ang T'ai Tsung in her opposition to Confucianism and was also more resolute and thorough than he was in carrying out the Legalist line. This was decided by her "humble" class status. The Ming Legalist Li Chih once warmly praised Wu Tse-t'ien for being "ten times superior to Kao Tsung and a hundred times superior to Chung Tsung," highly appraising her historical exploits. However, Wu Tse-t'ien was after all a politician of the landlord class. In her declining years she turned to the worship of Buddhism and indulged in a life of luxury. And while striking at the old big landlord aristocrats, she also fostered a group of new big landlord aristocrats. Nevertheless, judging by her life as a whole, she represented the plebeian landlord reformist clique, went along with the tide of history, courageously carried out reforms and fought bravely. All this deserves to be acknowledged affirmatively. She was worthy of being called an outstanding woman politician in Chinese history.

(The authors of this article are young workers attached respectively to Shanghai Instrument Plant, Yungsheng Metal Refining Plant and Haihai Agricultural Farm)

* * *

Looking Back at a Year of Combat

- How criticism of Lin Piao and Confucius has been carried out at our plant

by

the Party Committee, Shanghai No. 5 Iron and Steel Plant

(Hsüeh-hsi yü P'i-p'an /Study and Criticism/, No. 1, January 10, 1975)

One year has passed since the nationwide mass movement to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius was launched. As we are entering 1975 in vigorous strides with workers all over the country, it will be useful for us to look back at a year of combat in criticism of Lin Piao and Confucius and to conscientiously sum up the experience in our striving for still greater victories in the new year.

I. Firmly Grasping Criticism of Lin and Confucius

The movement to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius was conducted with vigor in our plant during the past year, with the vast numbers of the masses repudiating Lin Piao's emulation of Confucius' "restraining oneself and returning to propriety" early last year and castigating the reactionary trend of thought that negated the great proletarian cultural revolution. This was followed by criticism of undesirable Confucian works such as the Analects and Three-Character Classics, laying particular emphasis on digging at Lin Piao's old revisionist roots. After this was done, we began to study the history of the Confucian-Legalist struggle and that of class struggle as a whole. This wave of mass participation in study and criticism was sustained with persistence throughout our plant. The workers said, "Without the coking mirror in steel-making there is no way to distinguish steel from residue and failing to study revolutionary theory it would be difficult to differentiate genuine from sham Marxism." In their conscientious study of Marxist-Leninist works and Chairman Mao's writings, many read and studied seriously every day whenever they could spare time for it, with some going over Capital selectively. Brimming with revolutionary fervor, the masses plunged themselves into the combat. They came up with a variety of forms and this innovative spirit helped popularize and deepen the movement in criticism of Lin Piao and Confucius, thereby propelling it forward in a sustained manner. Throughout the plant over the past year criticism gatherings had been held thousands of times and study sessions 400-500 times in various departments and workshops. No less than 14 different versions of articles critical of the sinister works of Confucius and Mencius originated from the workshops and these came to over 300,000 words after they had been compiled, sorted out and processed. The masses themselves wrote and compiled 21 articles to explain the history of the Confucian-Legalist struggle and these amounted to more than 200,000 words. Altogether five different forms were employed to narrate the history of the Confucian-Legalist struggle alone, with some concentrating on individual Legalists

and others devoted to specific Legalist works. In some cases historical chronicles were recounted in narrative form; in others subjects centering around the Confucian-Legalist struggle covering periods from pre-Ch'in to Ming and Ch'ing were seriously discussed. This extensive involvement by the worker masses in the study and summation of the experience and lessons drawn from history in respect of class struggle had not happened before.

Whether or not criticism of Lin Piao and Confucius is firmly grasped is an important question relating to the issue of whether or not one persists in laying hold of matters of prime importance. During the movement to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius the masses have uncovered a variety of contradictions, the principal contradiction being that between Marxism and revisionism and between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the superstructure. Deepening the criticism of Lin Piao and Confucius and using Marxism to dominate the superstructure including philosophy, history, education, literature, art and law is the most important task confronting the whole Party and the people of the whole country. Therefore, when the movement is underway we should always direct the spearhead at Lin Piao and Confucius and avoid deviating from the general orientation of struggle such as distracting public attention about certain specific details. In the past year during which we boldly aroused the masses to repudiate Lin Piao's revisionist line, we also linked the repudiation with the realities of class and line struggles in our plant, like repudiating the reactionary trend of thought that negated the great proletarian cultural revolution and socialist newborn things. In addition, we also kept to the general orientation of struggle, strictly distinguished between two different types of contradictions and united over 95 percent of the cadres and the masses, including those comrades who had made this or that mistake and truly demonstrated their willingness to mend their ways. This was a pooling of efforts toward carrying the revolution in the superstructure to its completion. Whenever questions pertaining to the contradictions among the people were uncovered during the movement, we always followed Chairman Mao's teaching and solved these problems "by means of discussion, criticism and reasoning."

In the past year we kept to the general orientation of struggle in criticism of Lin Piao and Confucius, thus whipping up waves of support for study and criticism. With the vast numbers of cadres and rank and file having heightened their consciousness, their mental outlook had likewise undergone profound change. This resulted in a very fine situation in which everybody in the plant was united in combat and exerted himself with ardor.

II. Daring To Strengthen Leadership and Be Good At Relying on the Masses

The movement in criticism of Lin Piao and Confucius is a profound political and ideological revolution. In this struggle the Party organizations should have the daring to strengthen leadership and be good at relying on the masses.

Some of our comrades view the fundamental question concerning the relationship between leadership and the masses in a metaphysical sense. Once strengthening of leadership is mentioned, they tend to disregard allowing the masses ample use of the "four extensive" weapons. Once the subject of boldly arousing the masses is brought up, the response is one of the disapproving of the exercise of specific leadership. After the movement in criticism of Lin Piao and Confucius was launched in our plant, it kept forging ahead with considerable impetus. When the masses were not sufficiently aroused we were concerned with the inadequate amount of big-character posters that had been put up. But after the masses were fully aroused we began to fear lest the posters had multiplied without justification. Some comrades were afraid of making mistakes and they neither expressed approval or disapproval when problems arose. Others simply trailed behind the masses and accommodated their every wish. We feel that deepening of the movement to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius is contingent upon a proper handling of the question pertaining to the relationship between leadership and the masses.

In the past year we have repeatedly guided the cadres to appreciate the series of important directives issued by Chairman Mao and the Party Central Committee concerning the conduct of criticism of Lin Piao and Confucius so they would raise their level of understanding of the nature, objectives and meaning of this round of struggle. We also educated the cadres in recognizing the identity of purpose regarding the issue of strengthening Party leadership and relying on the masses. In the movement to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius, the broad masses displayed the proletarian revolutionary spirit and conducted criticism and exercised supervision over our cadres, this being symbolic of our thriving cause and illustrative of the ever greater consolidation of proletarian dictatorship. When the masses are critical of our defects they do so for the purpose of helping us more consciously implement Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line. And strengthening Party leadership is likewise aimed at unremittingly carrying out Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line and policies. Basically, all this is intended to oppose and combat revisionism so proletarian dictatorship may be further consolidated.

The process of strengthening leadership is the process of translating the Party line and policies into the conscious actions of the masses. Once the masses have a good grasp of the Party line and policies, many things can be tackled successfully. In the movement to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius, the workers in our plant were critical of the shortcomings of the Party committee concerning the implementation of policy matters during the great proletarian cultural revolution, and some big-character posters had directly involved a number of basic-level cadres and the masses. If this question was improperly handled it would affect the internal solidarity of the working class. We feel that throughout the course of the great proletarian cultural revolution these comrades could have had this or that shortcoming but the leadership was in the main held responsible. In committing ourselves to the responsibility, we guided the broad masses to sum up historical experience and correctly view certain questions that had arisen from the movement, with the suggestion that

comrades who had thought differently hold frank discussions. At the meeting exchanging experience of criticizing Lin Piao and Confucius, we encouraged them to freely talk about their own impressions for the purpose of fostering unity on the basis of Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line. What followed was a very fine situation in which the workers and staff of the entire plant joined in the common combat, discussing freely issues pertaining to line and policies and those concerning Party spirit and unity.

III. Summing Up and Propagating Typical Experience Promptly

In accordance with Chairman Mao's teaching "We must grasp typical cases well," we have over the past year got hold of a number of advanced typical cases. Altogether eight on-the-spot exchange and popularization meetings were held throughout the year, thus insuring the deepening of the movement.

There is the mainstream and tributaries in a movement. In grasping typical cases, importance should be attached to the mainstream, the key link. If this is grasped well, it would not be difficult to resolve non-essential problems. When the rank and file in our plant were aroused last April to repudiate Lin Piao and his emulation of Confucius' "restraining oneself and returning to propriety" in a vain attempt to restore capitalism, we came upon the problem of how to deepen the criticism. At this moment the workers of one workshop got hold of the Analects, the Confucian "Classic" long applauded by the reactionaries, and disdainfully picked out 20 passages which had spread their pernicious influence far and wide and subjected them to castigation. Their action demonstrated the determination of the worker masses to discredit Lin Piao and Confucius and displayed their revolutionary spirit of daring to repudiate the ideology of the exploiting classes. This was the mainstream in the movement to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius. After summing up their advanced experience, we popularized it throughout the plant. We also printed their Selected Criticism of the "Analects" and distributed copies among all the work shifts and groups in the plant. This produced strong reactions among the workers. Subsequently, three veteran workers proposed repudiating the Three-Character Classics which they declared was replete with the pernicious influence of Confucius and Mencius. Other workshops followed suit and began to castigate similar sinister Confucian works which had spread their pernicious influence far and wide. A people's war attacking Confucian and Mencian works was launched in the plant. This greatly aroused the revolutionary spirit of the rank and file and spurred other kinds of work.

IV. Foster a Contingent of Worker-Theorists

With the rapid maturing of worker-theorists in our plant over the past year, we have now a total force numbering well over 1,500. This has resulted in the setting up of theoretical groups in every work shift and group, with more than one such group in every work section. As the

assistant to the Party organization in political and ideological work, this contingent of theorists serves as the backbone of the mass participation in study and appears in the movement to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius in the nick of time to resolve problems that may arise. In study the theorists are always ahead of the rank and file, referring to the original texts when checking references before explaining the difficult questions raised by the masses. In criticism they make a practice of gathering the wisdom of the rank and file before sampling the "sour fruit" and attacking the "citadel" to blaze a new trail. Thus they have done a great deal of work in criticism of Lin Piao and Confucius. In the process of repudiating the Analects, the theoretical group of No. 2 Workshop first selected critical articles with good content. Then it called a forum in which more than 80 master workmen were asked to explain what they had found out. This way of linking theory with reality and embodying the language of the masses was well received by the rank and file.

"The line is the key link; once it is grasped, everything falls into place." Some of our comrades often have not understood well the importance of exercising proletarian dictatorship in the superstructure. In some cases they have even placed criticism of Lin Piao and Confucius in opposition to production. As a matter of fact, once criticism of Lin Piao and Confucius is grasped well the socialist activism of the masses will be brought into play and this will spur production. Propelled by the criticism of Lin Piao and Confucius last year, our plant witnessed a flourishing outlook whereby everyone struggled hard, relied on his own efforts, united in combat and worked with vigor.

Last year considerable difficulties were encountered in production. Several rolling mills were flooded by sea water and thermal furnaces collapsed because of alkaline erosion. Two of the three steel-refining workshops suspended their opreations for repairs lasting 110 days. Displaying the revolutionary spirit of "man's determination will overcome destiny," the workers overfulfilled the state plan for steel and steel supplies. Similarly, there was relatively rapid progress in the introduction of technical innovations; in converters and blast furnaces and in electric furnaces and rolling sections there was evidence of innovative contributions. Because of large increases in the variety and amounts of superior steel supplies produced by our plant, some items which had been imported before were no longer imported or imported less than before.

We won big victories in last year's combat. But the road to revolution is long and many battles have to be fought by us. In the new year we resolve to work harder than before and guided by Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line let us strive to win still greater victories!

* * *

Historical Characters Should Be Analyzed

- Briefly about the Legalists during the San Kuo [Three Kingdoms] period

by

Shen Yüeh (申越)

(Hsüeh-hsi yü P'i-p'an [Study and Criticism], No. 1, January 10, 1975)

Chairman Mao has taught us: "We must constantly bear in mind Lenin's words: make a concrete analysis of concrete things." In studying the history of the Confucian-Legalist struggle we must follow this teaching of Chairman Mao's and correctly assess the Legalists in history.

The period of the three states locked in contention and confrontations in the last years of the Han in Chinese history was marked by great upheavals and the rise to power of men of great ambitions amid rapidly changing circumstances. The Legalists who lived in this period were distinguished by their individual traits, but they presented common laws that could be traced. In studying the Legalists at this stage of history, we must place them in a given environment of class struggle before proceeding to make a concrete analysis. Such an analysis should not only include the different characteristics of individual Legalists at different periods but also embrace their common traits discernible by their differences. Only by observing these differences from their common features can we give these historical figures their appropriate historical affirmation.

We might as well begin with Ts'ao Ts'ao.

Ts'ao Ts'ao was a Legalist. However, his political role at an earlier stage differed from a similar capacity at a later stage. In his former role he suffered blows struck by the powerful clans and big landowners who tried to exclude him as he was from a less illustrious family. Ts'ao Ts'ao thus took the stand of the middle and small landlord class and bitterly resented these descendants of powerful families and the Confucian "government according to rules of propriety" they had followed. During this period he therefore displayed a marked inclination toward reverring Legalism and opposing Confucianism. As soon as he mounted the political stage he implemented a Legalist political line, introducing sweeping and stern measures in dealing with the powerful clans and big landowners. Because Ts'ao Ts'ao had at the time carried out a relatively correct line he succeeded in defeating the secessionist forces led by Yuan Shao who had challenged him. His successful unification of the north at this stage made him a hero in respect of opposing Confucianism and revering Legalism. However, in his political role at a later stage he gradually turned away from veneration of Legalism and opposition to Confucianism to a course of action characterized by "Confucian on the surface but Legalist in essence," following the stabilization of his rule and the ascent of the forces of the powerful clans and big landowners. This was what Ts'ao Ts'ao

called "propriety is first and foremost when rule is established." He also borrowed from the Confucian philosophy of Heavenly mandate to sway public opinion in favor of his becoming another "King Wen of Chou." This blemish in his otherwise commendable character was indeed deplorable.

Even in his earlier espousal of the Legalist philosophy, Ts'ao Ts'ao to a certain extent had in fact absorbed Confucian impurities. For example, on the one hand he took the atheist stand and openly disclaimed belief in things like Heavenly mandate, a demonstration of his opposition to the Confucian philosophy of Heavenly mandate. On the other hand, he was unable to free himself from the theist tangle and believed in such Confucian rubbish as sacrificial offering to the Divinity. While he bitterly resented the Confucian "government according to rules of propriety" and strongly advocated "rule by law" he was obsessed with the hypocritical Confucian practice of benevolence and righteousness and a spirit of resignation. In a political sense Ts'so Ts'ao had contributed in no small measure toward the cause of unification by curbing the influence of the powerful clans. On the other hand, his suppression of the Yellow Turban peasant uprising placed him in an unfavorable light. This shows that we can make an analysis of Ts'ao Ts'ao's both earlier and later stages as well as his political role in the early stage of his career.

Although Ts'ao Ts'ao's political aspirations in the later stage differed from those of the earlier stage, in the main he was inclined to revere Legalism and oppose Confucianism. Revering Legalism in essence, he sometimes revered Confucianism for appearance's sake. We must perceive essence through phenomenon and avoid ignoring what underlies phenomenon. For instance, in political maneuvers in his later years Ts'ao Ts'ao recruited quite a good number of Confucian scholars, not because he liked them but because for tactful considerations he wanted to keep an eye on them so they would not wander about to make trouble. Facts turned out to be so. Ts'ao Ts'ao put the prominent Confucianist K'ung Jung to death in 208 A.D. Outwardly, he did so in the name of the Confucian devotion to "filial piety." But Ts'ao Ts'ao could not have cared less about "filial piety." In the year 217 he was plainly in favor of employing those who "are neither benevolent nor filial but possess the ability to govern the state and lead troops." He frowned upon lavish burials and encouraged frugal funerals, a clear indication of his objection to the practice of filial piety. He merely took advantage of filial piety to eliminate those Confucianists who had opposed him. His elimination of K'ung Jung was in fact an act of "burying Confucian scholars alive." Commenting on this incident, Lu Hsün was quick to observe that "observance of conventions during the Wei and Tsin periods was more or less motivated by personal gain, by accident rather than design. The reason why Ts'ao Ts'ao put K'ung Jung to death and Ssuma I did the same thing to Chi K'ang, for instance, was that they both were in want of filial piety. However, neither Ts'ao Ts'ao nor Ssuma I was known for filial duty, they merely seized this as a pretext for incriminating their opponents." Although Ts'ao Ts'ao in his later years aspired to become another King Wen of Chou, for another

instance, one of his poems was vibrant with lofty ambitions even for people in their advanced years. This indicated that the approach of old age had not diminished his vigorous spirit and political ambitions worthy of a progressive Legalist. Hence, judging from Ts'ao Ts'ao's later role, he after all remained a true Legalist despite his discernible Confucian leanings. In view of Ts'ao Ts'ao's lifelong dedication to political pursuits, it should all the more be admitted that he was indeed quite a Legalist.

Ts'ao Ts'ao was a Legalist, but were all his opponents Confucianists? Not necessarily so. His opponents could have been Confucianists like Yuan Shao or non-Confucianists such as Liu Pei and Sun Chuan. In the case of the latter, they had for many years confronted Ts'ao Ts'ao on the battlefield and could be considered as the latter's arch political opponents. Does this provide any basis for identifying them as Confucianists? Positively not. Both Liu Pei and Sun Chuan pushed the Legalist line and policies for the purpose of unifying the domains under their control before proceeding to bring about a unified empire. Sun Chuan pursued the Legalist line of encouraging agriculture and war by giving land to those who had won military merit and of employing people on the basis of their proven abilities, measures that were enforced in the southeast regions of China. Liu Pei in his will exhorted his son to study Legalist works by Shen Pu-hai, Han Fei, Kuan Chung and Shang Yang for "intellectual enlightenment," indicating that he had been espousing the Legalist philosophy. In governing the state of Shu, Liu Pei and Chuko Liang summed up and absorbed the historical experience of the Former Han, which "prospered" because of enforcement of the Legalist line, and of the Latter Han, which "declined" because of adoption of the Confucian line. Both were bent on government by law, deserving to be called Legalists by virtue of their dedication to the cause of unification through the repression of powerful groups. In ideology and the political line, the three -- Ts'ao Ts'ao, Sun Chuan and Liu Pei -- were alike, resembling each other by temperament. No wonder Ts'ao Ts'ao spoke approvingly of both Liu Pei and Sun Chuan. Of the latter, he once said: "I wish I had a son like Sun Chung-mou." Before Liu Pei, he acknowledged that Liu was quite a man, a hero like himself. Although the three were Legalists they nevertheless were not without conflict among themselves, particularly because the three representatives of the interests of the middle and small landlord class represented respectively the interests of different political groups from different regions, with Ts'ao Ts'ao acting for the Central Plain, Liu Pei for Chingchow and Hsiangyang and Sun Chuan for the domain south of the Yangtze River. Thus within the landlord class the three mountain strongholds respectively represented the interests of the political groupings operating in different regions. They were after a unified empire but each was in favor of his own political grouping bringing about the unification. This factor caused strivings for power and gain among themselves. When they joined forces in fighting against the warlord group of big landlords represented by Tung Cho, there was a possibility of their acting in concert for a brief spell. After the threat posed by the warlord group of big landlords was in the main over, the contradiction among themselves became

the principal one. This reverted to the old state of strivings among the rivals, a situation which eventually led to settlement of the issues at stake by war. Since the winner of these strivings was often contingent upon the degree to which the Legalist line was put into force, their strivings to a certain extent did promote the implementation and triumph of the Legalist line.

History abounds in parallel instances. During the Warring States period the state of Ch'in became the political center of the newly rising landlord class. Ch'in unified the six states by going to war against them. This was in accord with the Legalist line pushed in the state of Ch'in. But not all opponents of Ch'in were Confucianists, Ch'ü Yuan being one of them. Taking the stand of the newly rising landlord class in the state of Ch'u, Ch'ü Yuan could not bear seeing Ch'u swallowed up by Ch'in so he strongly advocated allying Ch'i against Ch'in. We cannot cite this instance to disclaim Ch'ü Yuan as a Legalist. In an ideological sense, Ch'ü Yuan called for reform and this conformed to the Shang Yang reform and the Legalist philosophy which had prevailed in the state of Ch'in at the time. Furthermore, if drastic reforms had been introduced in the state of Ch'u, it likewise could have played a unifying role in place of Ch'in. Therefore, in affirming Ch'in's role we should not negate Ch'ü Yuan in an over-simplified manner. Similarly, in confirming Ts'ao Ts'ao as a Legalist we should in no way negate his opponents, Liu Pei and Sun Chuan. The metaphysical interpretation, such as viewing things "in this or that light," is at odds with the dialectical approach.

Although Ts'ao Ts'ao, Liu Pei and Sun Chuan were Legalists, they should in no way be viewed in the same breadth. Only when there is comparison can distinctions be made. Compared with Ts'ao Ts'ao in the political and military aspects, both Liu Pei and Sun Chuan after all were put into the shade. In the implementation of the Legalist line, they were less firm and exhaustive than Ts'ao Ts'ao. In curbing the influence of the powerful clans entrenched in the Central Plain, Ts'ao Ts'ao openly promulgated decrees prohibiting the powerful landowners from annexing tracts of land. He was equally severe in suppressing the Confucian forces represented by Pien Jang and K'ung Jung, who represented the interests of the powerful families and swayed public opinion in their favor. On the other hand, Liu Pei and Chuko Liang were not as firm and exhaustive in repressing the powerful landowners. While the two did restrain the hand of the powerful groups in annexing land, they sought to win the support of the big landowners by partially granting their requests and protecting their acquired interests. For example, they were tolerant toward the Confucian scholar like Lai Ming, who represented the interests of an illustrious and powerful family. This is largely because in his early years Liu Pei was tutored by a prominent Confucian scholar named Lu Chih and was therefore profoundly influenced by the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius. After long years of wandering he gradually freed himself from Confucian influence, though he was not very successful in shedding the remaining traces of Confucianism. As regards Sun Chuan, he was no match for Liu Pei. He accommodated big clans bearing the names of Lai, Chang, Ku and Lu and inhabiting the regions

south of the Yangtze River and compromised with them. In restraining the influence of the powerful clans, he was far behind Ts'ao and Liu. This in turn lulled him into seeking temporary peace politically and ideologically within his own domain. Viewing the trio as a whole, Ts'ao Ts'ao undoubtedly stood out. Installed as he was in the imperial court which dominated the Central Plain, Ts'ao Ts'ao rubbed shoulders with the members of the declining ruling clique in the last years of the Eastern Han period, at a time when the influence of the powerful clans and big landowners remained very strong while reactionary Confucianists were naturally active and rampant. In this whirlpool of conflicts and strivings Ts'ao Ts'ao was directly involved and therefore he had keenly sensed the acute nature of the developing Confucian-Legalist struggle. This made him more determined than ever in pushing the Legalist line and measures and alerted him to attach particular importance to the strivings in the ideological sphere of the superstructure. Not only was he familiar with fighting battles, he was also equally at home with political philosophy and stressed the importance of intellectual ferment. In improving music and ballads he was particularly successful. His literary accomplishments were enhanced by his erudition and patronage of the men of letters. This profoundly influenced literary expression in his time. Ts'ao Ts'ao's prominence and status among the intelligentsia of his day was held in high regard by Lu Hsün, who said: "Ts'ao Ts'ao himself was a venerable master in respect of the refinement of writing." This shows that what Ts'ao Ts'ao had accomplished was clearly greater than what his two contemporaries aspired to do. Subsequently, a unified empire of the Western Tsin rose on the foundation of the State of Wei.

Despite the trio's differing traits, they were by nature hostile to the forces of the peasant uprisings. Ts'ao Ts'ao was solely responsible for having put down the Heishan peasant force numbering more than a hundred thousand and the Yellow Turban force from Ch'ingchou that amounted to some 300,000 strong. Liu Pei likewise had a hand in Huang Fu-sung's bloody suppression of the Yellow Turban army led by Chang Chüeh and numbering over 200,000 men. As regards Sun Chuan, he himself as well as his father and elder brother were old hands in the suppression of peasant risings in the regions south of the Yangtze River. In putting down the Yellow Turbans, Ts'ao, Liu and Sun formed in fact a reactionary alliance. Judging from their common traits, those that suggested repression of the powerful clans and big landowners were identifiable with progress, while putting down the Yellow Turbans should be considered reactionary. These traits in the final analysis were dictated by the class status of the middle and small landlord class at that time.

An analysis of the Legalists during the San Kuo period indicates that a correct assessment of historical figures of necessity calls for a concrete analysis, a breaking down commensurate with their historical roles. For great and noble-hearted men we must look here in the present. The proletariat is the greatest class in the history of mankind. To accomplish the historical mission of that class, it has to conscientiously sum up the historical experience of class and line struggles under Marxist guidance and in the service of proletarian dictatorship. This is the right approach in viewing historical characters.

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The Red Army's Four Crossings on the Chihshui River

by

Shih Feng (史锋)

(Hsüeh-hsi yü P'i-p'an [Study and Criticism], No. 1, January 10, 1975)

The campaign in which the Central Red Army crossed the Chihshui River back and forth four times reflected the extraordinary flexible mobile warfare directed by Chairman Mao after the Tsun-i Conference.

Before the Tsun-i Conference, the worker and peasant Red Army during the Long March, governed by Wang Ming's "Left" opportunist line, could not shake off the encirclement, pursuit and interception by several hundred thousand enemy troops and was in danger of being completely annihilated. The Tsun-i Conference confirmed Chairman Mao's leadership over the whole Party and guided the Party line back onto the correct path of Marxism. Under his brilliant leadership, the Red Army soon became reinvigorated. It adroitly maneuvered among the outnumbering enemy troops, frustrated all their search attempts and dealt blows at them here and there. The four crossings on the Chihshui River laid the foundation for the success of the great Long March and represent a brilliant feat in the war annals of our army.

The Loushan Pass Battle and the Reoccupation of Tsun-i City

Following in the Red Army's footsteps, spring arrived in Kweichow in January 1935. On January 19, the Central Red Army commanded by Chairman Mao departed Tsun-i for the north. Inspired by the Tsun-i Conference, the fighters were making quick headway along a path in the rugged Talou range toward Chihshui on the Szechwan-Kweichow border.

Meanwhile, Chiang Kai-shek's reactionary troops were racing against us on a highway separated by a mountain. Hsüeh Yüeh's column with five divisions, Chou Hun-yüan's column with four divisions and Wu Ch'i-wei's column with three divisions, all Chiang Kai-shek's own troops, had been trailing us from Kiangsi to Kweichow. The troops of the Szechwan, Kweichow, Hunan and Yunnan warlords were also converging on us. They attempted to intercept and destroy our army in the mountainous area in northern Kweichow south of the Yangtze and north of the Wuchiang River.

Bearing the whole situation in mind, resourceful and decisive, Chairman Mao resolved, before the enemies completed their encirclement against us, to move the Red Army northward across the Yangtze River between Luchou and I-pin to link up with the Fourth Regional Army and establish new revolutionary base areas. In order to fulfill this objective, Chairman Mao ordered the Fourth Regional Army in the Szechwan-Shensi base areas to move part of its strength to the south to tie down the main

force of the enemy's Szechwan army, prevent the enemy from concentrating in the Yangtze River area, and thus facilitate the river-crossing by the First Regional Army. He also ordered the Second and Sixth Corps in the base areas of Hunan, Hupeh, Szechwan and Kweichow to move eastward and undertake a pincer drive in order to contain the enemy in the lower reaches of the Yangtze River in the interests of the First and Fourth Regional Armies.

In a strong offensive, the Central Red Army, moving northward from Tsun-i, successively broke through the enemy interceptions and was drawing near the Chihshui River.

The Chihshui River, snaking for 700 li, is an important waterway on the Szechwan-Kweichow border. It was an obstacle to the Red Army's march toward the Yangtze River. The south bank of the Yangtze is not far from the area across the Chihshui River.

Hou Chih-tan, a Kweichow warlord, deployed three regiments in Tucheng on the Chihshui River to intercept our army. The junior officers and soldiers of this reactionary army had long been overawed by our army since the battle of Wuchiang. Two of our leading battalions charged toward the enemy at the foot of a mountain and soon put the entire enemy regiments and battalions to disorderly flight. Enemy troops fled across the Chihshui River and crept like maggots up the mountain slope. Many of them fell and died under our machinegun fire. Later, this reactionary warlord Hou Chih-tan, who was repeatedly defeated by the Red Army, was punished by Chiang Kai-shek for his "poor performance in suppressing the bandits and losing important cities." On January 26, another portion of our army repulsed the attack by the so-called "model division" of the Szechwan army after fierce fighting around the clock near Tucheng. On January 28, our army defeated another reinforcement group of the Szechwan army, successfully crossed the Chihshui River, advanced to Hsuyung of Szechwan, only several dozen li away from the Yangtze River, and then began active preparations for crossing the River.

Then, the situation changed. Chang Kuo-t'ao, who was working with the Fourth Regional Army, disobeyed the orders of the Party Central Committee. Not only did he fail to press southward to attract the Szechwan army's main force, but on the contrary, he led his troops northward to southern Shensi instead of attacking the Szechwan army. Therefore, Liu Hsiang, a Szechwan warlord, could concentrate 36 regiments to blockade the Yangtze River and make all efforts to prevent the Central Red Army from entering Szechwan. At the same time, Wu Ch'i-wei's column and the Hunan, Kweichow and Yunnan armies, each with three divisions, were converging on us from the east, south and southwest, forming another big encirclement.

After analyzing the situation, Chairman Mao concluded that continuing the northward movement to face the enemy would only play into the hands of the enemy and meet his strategic requirements. Therefore he changed the original river-crossing plan and ordered the troops to

move westward toward the Chahsi (known as Weihsin today) area of Yunnan where the enemy had very little defense, and put the enemy behind us. In the Chahsi area, our army stopped for a short rest and consolidation, energetically conducted mass work, expanded the Red Army's strength with more than 3,000 recruits, and thus enhanced its prestige. Chiang Kai-shek immediately maneuvered his troops seeking to surround the Chahsi area. In so doing, he merely emptied his rear area. The army under Wang Chia-lieh, a Kweichow warlord, stationed in the area between Tungtzu and Tsun-i, in particular was the weakest link, with its men known as "two-gun soldiers"--carrying a rifle and an opium pipe. On February 11, Chairman Mao decided to "evade the strong and attack the weak," temporarily gave up the plan to move northward across the Yangtze, resolutely turned the Red Army around and moved it eastward toward Tungtzu and Tsun-i through Kulin. When the enemy finally heard about our eastward movement, he had already been left far behind along the Yangtze River.

Our army returned to the Chihshui River by two routes, the left and the right. The leading units on the left crossed the river at Erhlangtan, faced the enemy along the river, and routed two enemy regiments defending riverside blockhouses. Our force on the right successfully built pontoon bridges at T'aip'ingtu and crossed the Chihshui River for a second time. The two forces, dividing to move and uniting to attack, headed directly for Tungtzu and the Loushan Pass.

On February 24, our army occupied Tungtzu. Wang Chia-lieh immediately rushed to Tsun-i to direct the operation. He deployed two divisions between Tsun-i and Tungtzu to defend the Loushan Pass by taking advantage of the terrain there which is favorable to the defenders. Loushan Pass, located at the summit of the Loushan range, is surrounded by lofty and steep mountains. A highway tortuously zigzags through the pass. It is a strategic position that an army must contend for, a position that certainly "can be defended by a single man against 10,000 invaders." Without the barrier of Loushan Pass, Tsun-i is indefensible. On February 26, the Military Commission of the Party Central Committee ordered part of our main force to make a frontal attack on the pass, used another part to flank it, and concentrated all our forces on taking it. The enemy occupied the mountain ahead of us, but before he could take a firm stand, our army pressed a charge on Tienchinshan, located on high ground to the left of Loushan Pass. We attacked enemy field positions with machineguns and hand grenades, and enemy positions were soon shrouded in smoke. Then our Red fighters charged the enemy with glittering bayonets and seized Tienchinshan. The enemy held Loushan Pass stubbornly, built additional field works at key locations and continued shooting at us. Under heavy artillery cover, our army took several hills during twilight and forced the enemy to retreat. Then the enemy reinforcements made their counter-attack. We reciprocated four times in a seesaw, killed an enemy brigade commander and finally put the enemy in disarray. Then our army intensified its attack and over-ran Loushan Pass.

After capturing Loushan Pass, our army pressed ahead in pursuit of the enemy and reached Tsun-i city in the evening of February 27. By then, Wang Chia-lieh had moved his defeated remnants back to the old and new cities of Tsun-i. They blocked the gates of the new city with rocks and took advantage of the Hsiangchiang River to defend the old city. Our troops were so formidable that they soon climbed the wall of the new city, put the defenders to flight and with the support of the people in the city, promptly wiped out the city defenders and completely occupied the new city. At night, our army forded the river, climbed the wall of the old city, took an enemy position composed of three blockhouses and eight machineguns, and gained complete control of the old city of Tsun-i. Having completely lost two of his divisions, Wang Chia-lieh hurriedly escaped with only a few members of his retinue and soldiers.

While our army was launching the second attack on Tsun-i, Chiang Kai-shek immediately sent Chou Hun-yüan's column and Wu Ch'i-wei's column from afar to reinforce the Tsun-i defenders. Chairman Mao decided to destroy the enemy reinforcements while our army's morale had been boosted by the Loushan Pass victory. At dawn on February 28, the Military Commission ordered the First and Third Corps each to dispatch a regiment to approach by two routes toward the Lanpanteng and Yachi area to greet the enemy. The regiments were instructed to deal with the enemy mid-way by applying broad-front mobile defensive tactics, offer resistance at every turn and lure the enemy to the area outside Tsun-i city, where they were to construct field works, take advantage of the mountainous terrain for defense, and resolutely tie down the enemy so that our main force could surprise him from both flanks and wipe him out. At noon, our army engaged the two divisions under Wu Ch'i-wei in a violent seesawing battle in the Hunghuakang area to the south of Tsun-i city, contending for the vantage point of the Laoya Mountain. At dusk, our army made an all-out counter-attack. In the midst of echoing bugle calls, our army encircled the enemy and captured Chungchuangpu, the site of enemy headquarters. Wu Ch'i-wei fled toward Lanpanteng and his flight caused panic among the enemy troops. From the heights at Hunghuakang, we charged the enemy troops and made them flee in disorder like maggots in a nightsoil pit. The defeated enemy troops ran for their lives in all directions, many were captured even by our logistics personnel and by our wounded and sick soldiers. Thus our army advanced to the north bank of the Wuchiang River in pursuit of the enemy. After Wu Ch'i-wei fled across the Wuchiang River, he realized that the Red Army would soon be there. To save his own skin, he had to forsake his remaining troops and immediately broke the chains connecting the pontoon bridge, leaving more than 1,800 of his men and a great deal of military supplies and weapons on the other side of the river to be captured intact by our army.

In the period between our second crossing on the Chihshui River and our reoccupation of Tsun-i city, we wiped out a total of 20 enemy regiments and obtained much booty. That was the Central Red Army's first great victory since the Long March. It enhanced the Red Army's

prestige in Szechwan, Hunan, Yunnan and Kweichow, eased the difficulties confronting the Second and Sixth Corps, and stimulated the fighting will of the armymen and people in various base areas. The various corps held ceremonious rallies to celebrate our victory and praise the triumph of Chairman Mao's strategic plan. The commanders and fighters recalled the situation in the early stage of the Long March when the army was dominated by Wang Ming's line, marched but did not fight, and was forced into a passive position by the enemy just like being bitten by dogs every day. They also contrasted that situation with the situation after the Tsun-i Conference when the army, guided by Chairman Mao's military line, could march smoothly, fight beautiful battles and win one victory after another. With deep feelings, they attributed the favorable situation to the "magic of Chairman Mao's concept of mobile warfare!"

Do not say that the strong pass is guarded with iron. This very day in one step we shall pass its summit. Filled with triumphant confidence, the Red Army commanders and fighters then went on fighting.

Shake Off Enemy Pursuit by Detouring, Overcome the Natural Obstacle of the Wuchiang River Once Again

After our army had broken through the enemy's encirclement and shaken off his pursuit, our struggle involved moving to new regions to establish revolutionary base areas, freeing ourselves from a passive position and regaining the initiative remained very stupendous. A military leader may often be forced into a passive position by the enemy, but the important thing is to regain the initiative quickly.

The Loushan Pass campaign and our reoccupation of Tsun-i city greatly frightened the enemy and upset Chiang Kai-shek. This ambitious but stupid big dictator considered his lackeys incompetent and deemed it necessary to exercise direct command. On March 2, he angrily flew to Chungking to personally direct the "suppression." He again implemented the blockhouse strategy--the old magic he used in the fifth "encirclement and suppression" campaign--and advanced his troops step by step by means of the old strategy of building blockhouses in a vain attempt to surround and destroy our army. Knowing Chiang's tricks, Chairman Mao met the enemy's scheme with his own deceptive plan. He deliberately kept some forces lingering in the Tsun-i area, pretending they were searching for the enemy in order to lure the enemy to concentrate more troops and free our army from pursuit by a strong enemy force. According to Chairman Mao's instructions, part of our army operated between Tsun-i and Tungtzu to block the enemy from the north while its main force was seeking out the enemy in the Yachi, Fenghsianggpa and the Pailakan area to the west of Tsun-i. Not knowing our army's strategic intentions, Chiang Kai-shek mistakenly believed that our army's "major operational policy was yet to be decided." He also thought it was an opportune time to encircle and destroy our army on the grounds that an area with mountains running from east to west was not suitable for a large army concentration and that our

army could only "break up into small bands to conduct guerrilla actions." Therefore, he ordered his army to press forward toward the Tsun-i area. This precisely met Chairman Mao's strategic intentions. On March 11, the Red Army, led by Chairman Mao, evaded the enemy and moved westward. It seized Jenhuai (known as Chungshu today) on March 15, crossed the Chihshui River for the third time at Maotai to go into southern Szechwan again the following day. Chiang Kai-shek's fond dream, the blockhouse strategy, thus failed to come true. As he thought that our army would move north across the Yangtze River again, he hastily made new dispositions, deployed Hsüeh Yüeh's force to southern Szechwan to intercept us and ordered the Szechwan army to undertake a strong defense in the Hsuyung area. Five columns composed of units of the Szechwan, Kweichow and Hunan armies and units under Wu Ch'i-wei and Chou Hun-yüan were to move from north of Tungtzu toward Jenhuai by parallel routes. He also moved the Yunnan army out of Pichieh to pursue us. In addition, he built a number of blockhouses in the area west of Tsun-i and east of the Chihshui River and set up a great cordon in a vain attempt to trap and destroy our army at one swoop.

When the enemy was about to complete his disposition, one of our regiments, pretending to be our main force, continued its advance toward the Kulin and Hsuyung areas in southern Szechwan to deceive the enemy, while our main force, taking advantage of the enemy's emptied rear area, turned around and moved eastward. On March 21, our main force crossed the Chihshui River for the fourth time at T'aip'ingtu to the northwest of Maotai. It then made fast headway by maneuvering through the gaps among the several hundred thousand enemy troops, reached the north bank of the Wuchiang River by way of Fenghsiangpa and left all the pursuing enemy forces far behind.

The Wuchiang River, a natural obstacle, once again lay in front of the Red Army. The current was rapid and the 100-foot-high precipice across the river was guarded by enemy troops. At midnight on March 29, a platoon from our vanguard regiment, under the cover of a thunderstorm, quietly crossed the river in bamboo rafts, climbed the vine-laced precipice, wiped out the enemy defenders and thus gained control of the ferry landing. Soon after daybreak, a complete division promptly crossed the river. On March 31, the main force of our army built pontoon bridges at various locations, crossed the Wuchiang River and then pressed forward toward Kweiyang. Only the Red 9th Corps was ordered to remain on the north bank of the Wuchiang River to deceive the enemy and tie him down.

Chairman Mao's flexible mobile tactics confused Chiang Kai-shek, forced him into a passive position and dealt him blows everywhere. Our success in nailing his several hundred thousand troops in an area north of the Wuchiang River proved the failure of his personal direction of the "suppression" from Chungking. On March 24, Chiang hurriedly flew to Kweiyang to make "personal disposition" and exercise "unified command." Of course, the result could only be to "concentrate" his main force for Chairman Mao's disposal.

Adroitly Cross the Chinsha River by Making a Feint on Kweiyang and Kunming

After our army crossed the Wuchiang River, it met no resistance at all and soon was closing in on Kweiyang city as the enemy main force south of the Wuchiang River had been lured by us to move out to the north.

We can cause the enemy to make mistakes by our own actions, for instance, by "counterfeiting an appearance," as Sun Wu-tzu called it, that is, by making a feint to the east while attacking in the west. In order to attain our strategic objective of moving to the north by way of Yunnan, Chairman Mao once more applied the stratagem of making a feint to the east while attacking in the west and compelled Chiang Kai-shek to deploy his troops in accordance with our wishes. Chairman Mao sent a portion of our army to attack in the direction of Wengan and Huangp'ing, pretending to move eastward toward Hunan. He also deployed our army in such a manner as to make the enemy think that we were planning to attack Kweiyang. Chairman Mao pointed out that we would surely win if we could lure the Yunnan army to move out of Yunnan.

At that time, Chiang Kai-shek, who was directing the operations in Kweiyang, was as anxious as an ant on a hot pan because there were only a division and a military police regiment defending the city. He wanted to make all efforts to keep Kweiyang and at the same time he was afraid that our army might move eastward to link up with our Second and Sixth Corps in western Hunan. He was so confounded that he made a mess of his troop movements. He ordered Ho Chien, a Hunan warlord, to envelop our Second and Sixth Corps. He also ordered his main force under Hsüeh Yüeh to join hands with the Hunan, Kweichow and Szechwan armies to put up defenses in northern Kweichow, eastern Kweichow and western Hunan to check our eastward advance. Meanwhile, he hurriedly ordered two divisions of the Hunan army to move to Hsifeng, and ordered by telegram the forces under Lung Yün, a Yunnan warlord, to rush to Kweiyang. The enemy forces moved about in panic like hornets whose nest had been disturbed. Nevertheless, Chiang Kai-shek, who looked tough but was weak within, pretended to be calm. Encouraging his troops, he madly yelled: "The Communist Party has fallen into our trap. We must step up our pursuit to prevent it from having a breathing space." While the Kweiyang defense was weak, Chiang Kai-shek had no troops to fight for him there and was about to lose face by his escape, our army surprised the enemy by laying siege to Lungli and reaching Kuchiao, located only 30 li from Kweiyang. There, we routed the Yunnan army that had just arrived in response to Chiang's order. Moreover, our army at once advanced to the Kweiyang airfield and Huangnishao, located only a little over 10 li from Kweiyang. In great panic, Soong Mei-ling hastily destroyed the military maps in a bath room and Chiang Kai-shek immediately sent flash messages to his subordinates in various areas of the country, ordering them to rush reinforcements to Kweiyang on the double in order to save his life.

"When the enemy begins to maneuver his troops in a disorderly way and make false moves, the relative strength of the two opposing armies will naturally no longer be the same as before." While Chiang Kai-shek was seized with panic in Kweiyang and the Yunnan army was sent away from home, Chairman Mao had fulfilled his intention of keeping the Yunnan army away from Yunnan. On April 9, the main force of our army bypassed Kweiyang, crossed the Hunan-Kweichow highway and thrust toward Yunnan. After our army disengaged the enemy, it was able to march 120 li or so daily as if it had wings. On April 12 and 13, it took three county towns successively. By then, Chiang Kai-shek began to realize that our army was moving toward Yunnan. He immediately moved Hsüeh Yüeh's units and the Yunnan, Kweichow, Hunan and Kwangsi armies toward such places as Anshun, Changchai, Tzuyun, Lotien, and Tseheng to the southwest of Kweiyang in a vain attempt to block us from moving westward. However, our army was so fast that it crossed the Peipan River safely on April 15, and then seized such counties as Chenfeng, Anlung, Hsingjen and Hsing-i. By the time the enemy arrived there, we had left and were far away. The enemy helplessly watched us march into Yunnan. To cover up his poor commandership, Chiang Kai-shek acted like a skinny man who slaps his own face to make it swell so that the cheekbones would not look too prominent. He talked such nonsense as: It was because of his presence and fast moves that the Red Army dared not attack Kweiyang. He was indeed most shameless.

If our army had moved straight toward the Chinsha River after it entered Yunnan, the enemy would soon catch up with it. Instead, our army moved westward in two groups, captured such counties as Chan-i, Malung, Hsuntien and Sungming, and posed a threat to Kunming. As the Yunnan army had moved out of Yunnan, it had left its rear area unguarded. Lung Yün was so scared that he called for help from Chiang Kai-shek, ordered local militia forces from various areas of the province to rush to Kunming as reinforcements and thus emptied those areas of defense forces. The Political Bureau of the [CCP] Central Committee made a timely analysis of the situation and concluded that after some three months of mobile warfare, it was feasible for our army to move to western Szechwan to establish new revolutionary base areas. Therefore, it decided to cross the river right then at that opportune time when the "pursuing enemy forces are far behind us" and while "both banks of the Chinsha River are poorly defended." On April 29, the Military Commission of the Party Central Committee issued the "Directive on Our Army's Immediate Crossing of the Chinsha River and Establishment of Soviet Areas in Western Szechwan."

The Chinsha River runs through a narrow gorge between lofty mountains and precipices. It is wide, usually 300 to 600 meters wide between ferry landings on either banks, with roaring rapids and very difficult terrain. Although there were not too many enemy troops in the area at that moment, the enemy had already been redeploying troops to the area, ordered that all boats be destroyed and the river blockaded to prevent our army from moving across. If our army failed to cross the river promptly, it would be in danger of being trapped in the gorge and

destroyed by the enemy. Both the enemy and we were trying to seize the ferry landings. Our army acted in accordance with Chairman Mao's plan. The Fifth Corps, deployed to the outside of the city wall of Kunming, built ladders for climbing the wall to pretend preparing for an attack. Chiang Kai-shek hastily rushed to Kunming to direct the operation, airlifted troops from Kweichow to reinforce Kunming and dispatched aircraft to reconnoiter our movement. Our First Corps, having orders to continue its westward thrust, arrived at the ferry landing at Lungchieh on the upper reaches of the Chinsha River by way of Wuting and Yuanmou. It was not a good site for crossing because the river there was wide and enemy aircraft could undertake low-flying harassment. Therefore the First Corps pretended to build bridges to make the enemy believe that we were crossing the river. Chiang Kai-shek immediately ordered his units, including those under Hsüeh Yüeh, to pursue us in a vain attempt to besiege us in the Yuanmou area. While the enemy massed his troops in Kunming and the Yuanmou area, our army, acting on Chairman Mao's orders, moved in two groups to the lower reaches of the Chinsha River. Our Third Corps rushed to Hungmentu (known as I-chiang today), the Cadre Regiment of the Military Commission seized Chiaochetu, and the Fifth Corps brought up the rear to provide cover.

On May 1, the Cadre Regiment of the Military Commission successfully crossed the Chinsha River at Chiaochetu. The next morning, the regiment, leaving one company to guard the ferry landing, moved across difficult mountains to attack Tungan. It wiped out two Szechwan regiments there and thus consolidated the ferry landing. Then our First, Third and Fifth Corps gathered at Chiaochetu preparing to cross the river. On May 4, about five enemy regiments arrived in pursuit of us. They were defeated by our rearguard units and had to retreat to Tuanchieh to await reinforcements. Organized carefully by the river-crossing command, our army, using seven small boats, successfully crossed the difficult Chinsha River in a calm and orderly way, without losing a man or a horse. When the enemy main force arrived at the ferry the next day, the boats had been destroyed by us and the Red Army had completely vanished. The enemy could not but look at the river and sigh. Our Ninth Corps, left in the area on the northern bank of the Wuchiang River to intercept the enemy, successfully completed its holding action and then safely crossed the Chinsha River near Chiaochia. After it crossed the river, our army marched on toward the north along the Szechwan-Sikang border.

Warm are the cloud-topped cliffs washed by the river of golden sand [Chinsha] under Chairman Mao's brilliant command. Our army adroitly crossed the Chinsha River, freed itself from envelopment by several hundred thousand enemy troops, and gained the initiative for a strategic retreat. This was the key to the success of the Long March, which shook both China and foreign countries.

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Commanded by Chairman Mao, this campaign to cross the Chihshui River four times fully embodied Chairman Mao's great strategic concept of mobile warfare. In spite of the encirclement, pursuit and interception by several hundred thousand enemy troops, our army was able to march in big strides, maneuver about in a vast area and operate with high mobility and flexibility. It also took advantage of good opportunities to concentrate a superior force to wipe out the effectives of the enemy in mobile warfare, regain the initiative and win decisive victories during the strategic retreat. However, "correct political and military lines do not emerge and develop spontaneously and tranquilly, but only in the course of struggle." During the campaign in which the Red Army crossed the Chihshui River four times, there was an acute struggle between Chairman Mao's revolutionary military line and the opportunist military lines of Wang Ming and Lin Piao. After the Tsun-i Conference, the bourgeois conspirator Lin Piao repeatedly disobeyed Chairman Mao's orders and adhered to an escapist line. Because of situation changes at the end of January after the Red Army had crossed the Chihshui River the first time, Chairman Mao and the Military Commission of the Party Central Committee decided to cancel the plan for crossing the Yangtze River between Luchou and I-pin and adopt the strategic plan of conducting mobile warfare in the Szechwan-Yunnan-Kweichow border region. Lin Piao was ordered to lead the First Corps to concentrate in Chahsi, but he disobeyed the order and led the troops to other faraway areas. In early February, the Military Commission gave several instructions to Lin Piao reiterating the necessity of concentrating in Chahsi, but he remained adamant. On the contrary, he requested the Military Commission and the main force to move north to get nearer to him. He did not move his troops to the designated area until the Military Commission severely criticized him for the sixth time and ordered him to bring his troops back. By that time, he had already delayed four whole days at a crucial moment when the enemy forces were converging on us.

After our army crossed the Chihshui River the second time and created favorable conditions for the operation, Chairman Mao made the correct disposition for re-liberating Tsun-i. Nevertheless, Lin Piao made a Right-deviating analysis of the situation, exaggerated the difficulties, and haggled with the Military Commission. It was only on the insistence of Chairman Mao and the Military Commission that Lin Piao was finally compelled to execute the order and attack the enemy at Loushan Pass at the prescribed time. Later on, our army continued fighting in a highly mobile way and crossed the Chihshui River for the fourth time. Lin Piao then spread slanders, saying such tactics would wear down the troops as it made the army go in circles. He made all-out efforts to attack Chairman Mao and the Military Commission. In collaboration with P'eng Te-huai, he created an evil wind of opposing the leadership of Chairman Mao and the Military Commission of the Party Central Committee. Clamoring that "the present leadership is no good," he plotted to usurp the power of the Party and the army. He did not restrain himself until he was compelled to do so in the middle of May when the Party Central Committee called a meeting in which Chairman Mao

made a stern criticism of their activities. These facts show that in the course of implementing Chairman Mao's proletarian military line, struggle has always been very acute. The victory of the campaign in which our army crossed the Chihshui River four times was a great victory of Chairman Mao's proletarian military line over the bourgeois military lines of Wang Ming and Lin Piao!

The Red Army fears not the trials of a distant march; to them a thousand mountains, ten thousand rivers are nothing. Under the brilliant leadership of our great leader Chairman Mao, our army crossed the Chinsha River and with still more enhanced morale, marched on toward victory, singing the river-crossing song: "The Red Army has victoriously crossed the roaring Chinsha River. Chiang Kai-shek is seized with great panic and the imperialists become desperate."

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Bear the Overall Situation in Mind

- some understanding from studying Chairman Mao's military thinking

by

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To win or lose a war, to succeed or fail in work -- all these depend upon whether or not the commander manages to keep the overall military situation in mind. Chairman Mao says: "The first and foremost problem in winning or losing a war is whether or not we have properly taken into consideration the overall situation as well as its various phases." We must seriously study the guiding rules of overall military operations and learn to grasp the substance of an overall situation. This is the main key to successfully assuming full command of an overall situation so as to win victory in revolutionary war.

The overall situation of a war is a matter of strategy. It is not merely the total sum of campaigns and battles; it is an overall thing that reflects the essence and laws of war. For the part to submit to the whole is one of the principles which we must observe in waging a revolutionary war. Why? Because "parts belong to the whole." A battle or a campaign is merely part of a war as a whole, and it is, moreover, a link in achieving the strategic objective. In commanding a military operation, it is necessary to link up partial plans or operations with the overall objective from the overall point of view, and under the principle of subordinating the part to the whole, we must strive to unify our pace and action throughout a campaign. "Obey orders in all our actions" -- this is a high generalization of the principle that the part must be subordinate to the whole. During the War of Resistance against Japan, the commanders of the various combat units of our army firmly carried out Chairman Mao's guiding principles in the strategy of waging a protracted defensive war on the interior lines and launching offensives of quick decision on the exterior lines as well as a whole set of concrete measures that went along with them. It was only then that our army defeated the Japanese invaders. If the various parts did not submit to the strategy of the various periods and if each commanding officer acted on his own judgment, the overall situation would certainly be impaired. By firmly keeping the part in subordination to the whole, we can view the connections among the various aspects of a war from a higher level of strategy, understand and handle all the problems that may arise in the course of a war, and enforce unity of action under a strategic goal among the divisions, regiments, battalions, companies and platoons to win the victory. As it is to war, this principle of subordinating the part to the whole equally applies to industry, agriculture, commerce and all other work. This is the only way to unify the objective, action and pace of every area and part of the nation.

The overall situation of a war is not an abstract thing, for it is made up of all the parts of a war. The realization of an overall military objective depends upon the fulfillment of every campaign and work by all sectors during the various stages of a war. To turn the victory of a part into one of the whole requires one condition, which is to give play to the initiative of the part. At the beginning of the Chinese revolutionary war, the newborn Red Army was in an inferior and passive position. How could this position be changed? It was under the leadership of Chairman Mao and through the initiative of each and every part that our army managed to tip the overall scales in its favor -- from inferiority to superiority, from passivity to activity -- and win the final nationwide victory after defeating the eight million troops under Chiang Kai-shek. Dialectical materialism holds that while the whole is higher than the part, the part acts on and influences the whole, and in order to win overall victory, one must give free scope to the initiative of every part. Therefore, to bring the initiative of the part into full play is what the commander must do in order to actively strive to win the war.

The active role of each part must be brought into play under the command of the whole. In giving scope to the active role of a part, the commanding officer must "master the situation of both sides, find the laws of their movements, and apply these laws to his own actions." Such initiative is advantageous to the development and victory of war and conforms to the law of war development. The greater the scope you give to such active role, the more initiative you will gain in war, and the sooner you will win the victory. The opportunists, on the contrary, are military adventurists who advocate "attack along the entire front," "using both fists to strike at the enemy," "don't be afraid if you are not clear about the situation," "charge forward vehemently" and "fight it out," "come what may." Such blind and reckless tactics may at first appear to be "active." But they are against the laws of the development of war, and are actually destructive to the revolutionary war. The more you do so, the greater will be the loss and defeat. We must learn from the past experiences of our army. The active role of each division and part must be brought into play under the guidance of Chairman Mao's revolutionary line, and we must oppose and prevent the practice of giving scope to "an active role" without taking into account the overall situation.

To master the overall situation, one must get hold of the key to the entire situation. A war is composed of many parts, and each part has its own different role. Some parts play a key role while others play a general one. Thus, the commander "should focus his main attention on matters or actions that are the most important and decisive to his entire military operation." There are quite a number of instances in the history of war where after winning one battle after another, the army suffered a crushing defeat and lost all its former gains. There are also many cases in which the army, losing one battle after another, won an overwhelming victory and opened up a new phase. "One battle won" and "one battle lost" mentioned here are the key points in a war. To get hold of these key points, the commander must apply the dialectical materialist method to find out in the midst of intricate and complex contradictions the principal

contradiction that plays the decisive role in the war. It is only by grasping the principal contradiction that the commander can win the initiative in the entire war and thereby create advantageous conditions for winning the victory. After the War of Liberation entered its third year, Chairman Mao, acting upon the overall situation, first launched the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign, taking Chinchow as the first target and thus grasping the key of the campaign. Capturing Chinchow would cut off the links between the enemies at three points and put them in a helpless and isolated position. This would close the gate of the Northeast and wiping out Chiang's troops then and there would make the nationwide military situation enter a new stage. Centering the attention on the operation against Chinchow was to grasp the principal contradiction of the entire campaign, and a move of the utmost and decisive significance made by Chairman Mao bearing the overall situation in mind. If we should divide our forces equally for all parts in a war, instead of directing our main attention to key points, we would fall into a passive position. Only by grasping the key points can we gain the initiative to direct the overall situation. Similarly, we should also grasp the principal aspects of work in other fields. In agricultural development, grain must be taken as the key link; in industrial development, measures should be taken to insure the construction of major projects; in the field of capital construction, key projects must be put into operation on time. "In a word, the principle is to focus our attention on those key links bearing on the overall situation."

To grasp the principal part, however, does not mean to give up the general parts, for both are organic components. The various parts in a war interact on and govern each other. In order to insure the victory of a major campaign, it is necessary to have the cooperation of other units. Without the effective coordination of the "supporting cast," the principal operation cannot be insured. In the Liaohsi-Shenyang campaign, the battle of interception at Tashan was waged in coordination with the major operation in Chinchow and played only a secondary and supporting role. But without this battle to intercept the enemy's nine divisions heading from Hulutao to Chinchow, it would have been impossible to capture Chinchow quickly. This is true for other fields of work as well. It is impossible to have only machinery and equipment without paying attention to the maintenance and repair of parts, nor is it possible to put all our attention on grain production and neglect the overall development of agriculture, forestry, livestock breeding, sideline production and fishery. It is also impossible to develop heavy industry without caring for light industry. If we grasp only the principal part and disregard the general parts, we would lose the coordination of the general parts and defeat the purpose of grasping the principal part altogether. This would affect the overall situation. The only way to gain an all-round understanding of the overall situation is by giving attention to the general while grasping the key part.

To subordinate the part to the whole, we must correctly handle the contradiction between the two. The contradiction between the part and the whole is shown in the contradiction between partial and overall

interests, temporary and long-term interests. In military warfare, it is shown in the contradictions between sacrifice and preservation, attack and retreat, seizing or losing one city or place and annihilating the enemy's effective strength. These are contradictions between partial gain and overall loss, and vice versa. What should be done in the event of conflict between partial and overall interests? Chairman Mao teaches us: "If a plan is feasible from the viewpoint of the partial situation and not from the overall situation, the partial interests should be subordinate to the overall situation; if the plan isn't feasible in a partial situation, but feasible in an overall situation, the partial interests should likewise be subordinate to the overall interests." This is the criterion upon which we should base our actions in relation to the interests of the overall situation. The part and the whole contradict as well as unite with each other. The overall interests are always realized through the correct handling of the relations between the part and the whole. If we see only the part and not the whole, and if we see only the partial interests of a unit or a battle and not the fundamental interests of the whole of the war nor the whole of the battlefield, it would be impossible to accomplish the great task of the revolutionary war.

In revolutionary war, plans that are partially feasible but wholly infeasible should not be carried out at all. We should act in the interests of overall strategy. In the early period of the Peiping-Tientsin campaign, our army concentrated its superior forces and surrounded separately the enemy at Paoting and the remnants of Tu Yu-ming's corps of the enemy forces in East China. From the viewpoint of the partial situation, it was entirely possible to immediately wipe out these two positions. But in view of the overall situation, it was more favorable to "encircle without attacking" for the time being so as not to frighten the enemy forces in Peiping and Tientsin into escaping by sea. Although this would mean a delay in wiping out the enemy of these two places, it would, however, bring about an opportunity to completely annihilate the enemy in Peiping and Tientsin, and thus to accelerate the development of the war. The purpose of temporarily giving up certain partial "gains" was precisely to achieve bigger overall "gains." On the other hand, plans that are infeasible in view of the partial situation but workable as far as the overall situation is concerned should be carried out resolutely. In the final stage of the Second Revolutionary Civil War, the Red Army withdrew from its Red base areas in Kiangsi and carried out a massive strategic retreat. Though this was detrimental to the partial interests of the Kiangsi base areas and the people there, it was, in view of the overall situation, the only way to extricate the Red Army from its passive situation and preserve the revolutionary seeds of the people's armed forces. If it weren't for the temporary loss of the Kiangsi base areas, the Red Army would not have been able to grow and develop and win the final victories in the Resist-Japanese War and the nationwide Liberation War. In a word, the principle of subordinating the part to the whole embodies not only the interests of the whole but also the basic interests of the part. But men of reckless action do not take the whole situation into consideration; they base their actions upon the interests of the partial situation only. They are unwilling to combine the current and future interests and the partial and overall interests.

This is "military near-sightedness," which once caused damage to the revolutionary war. We must guard against such "near-sightedness" in our work. We must learn to broaden our vision and take the overall situation into consideration. We must not allow our line of vision to be obstructed by a "small mountain." We must not let ourselves be confined to the partial, narrow interests. We should not allow ourselves to be dominated by the small world of partial interests.

In making overall plans for the revolutionary war, we should see the various favorable conditions as well as the sharp struggles and the many difficulties that may arise in the course of progress. Our revolutionary war was carried out under the most difficult circumstances in which our army, using only millets plus rifles, had to fight against the heavy odds of the enemy forces of Chiang Kai-shek who were well-equipped with planes plus cannon. But unfavorable conditions can be transformed into conditions favorable to the development of war through the subjective initiative and creativeness of the commanding officer. "Development and obstruction are two opposite sides of a contradiction. All contradictions should and can be resolved." Though the Right-deviating opportunists were appalled at the enemy's "military might" and asserted that it was "very difficult to fight" "under conditions that were not yet ripe," the facts of victory had long ago proven them wrong. As our army kept the overall interests of the war in mind, it was able to surmount all difficulties without fear of sacrifice or death and in a dauntless revolutionary spirit, won victory after victory. Today, in our socialist construction, we must also experience sharp struggles and all sorts of difficulties. In increasing industrial production, for instance, we may face such difficulties as lack of raw material and shortage of manpower, equipment and plant. But as long as we bear in mind the overall interests of the seven hundred million people, as long as we go all out for the interests of the revolution and give full play to the militant role of the commander in revolutionary war, we will succeed in mobilizing the socialist initiative of the broad masses of the people, overcome all difficulties arising on the road of progress, and promote the development of revolution and production.

In upholding the viewpoint of the whole in war, we must combat the wrong tendency to claiming independence, which is extremely destructive to the interests of the revolution as a whole. The commanding officer must unconditionally obey orders. The inevitable result of acting on one's own in a partial operation in total disregard for general orders will surely undermine the unity between the part and the whole. Beginning with his struggle for military power, Chang Kuo-t'ao later developed to the extent of setting up a false "Central Committee," calling himself "chairman," and ultimately betraying the Party and becoming an enemy agent. Lin Piao opposed our army's united strategic policy by setting up an independent kingdom of his own, saying "you have a thousand plans, I have my old doctrines." Clinging to his "old doctrines," he attempted to subvert the overall interests of the revolution, split up the Party and the army. The purpose of the opportunists in claiming independence and personal military power was to "integrate" our army into the enemy's

"headquarters" to serve the "overall" interests of landlords and the bourgeoisie. Those who claim independence see only the interests of their small mountainhold or clique, and fail to see the interests of the Party and people as a whole. To them, partial interests come before everything else, and they always want to subordinate the overall interests to the partial interests. Any attempt to set up an independent kingdom is "extremely damaging to the interests of the revolution." It is through its struggle against such opportunists that our army has succeeded in implementing Chairman Mao's strategic principles. To maintain the interests of the whole, we must continue our struggle against all sorts of agitations for independence.

In the final analysis, the question of whether one can firmly adhere to the principle of subordinating one's actions to the overall situation of the war is a question of stand and world outlook. Driven by their proletarian class nature, our commanders obey the orders of Chairman Mao and the Party Central Committee, submit to the Party's unified command over the army and bear in mind the general interests of war. The proletariat is the greatest and the most advanced class in the history of mankind, and the commander of the army representing this class must take the liberation of the whole of mankind as the biggest general concept. Guided by this world outlook, our army has displayed the militant spirit of fearing neither hardship nor death in war. On the other hand, sticking to their bourgeois stand and world outlook, the opportunists clamor for independence from and promote division within the Party during war. The bourgeoisie has its class concept of "public" and group interests. Though the commanders of the reactionary Kuomintang army fought desperately against our army to preserve the rule of their own class, and though in so doing each commander tried to give support to their main forces, they began to fight for themselves when they were up against the danger of being wiped out themselves. Such is the nature of the bourgeoisie. In order to persist in the struggle of upholding the interests of the overall situation, we proletarians must continuously change our subjective world as well as the objective world. We must completely free ourselves from the traditional concept of private ownership. This is the only way to firmly establish the proletarian concept of overall interests.

To bear in mind and subordinate ourselves to the whole, we must unite together. The relationship between the whole and the parts of a revolutionary cause is reflected in the relationship between one part and another. This means that the relationship between various parts is one of unity and mutual help. Thus, unity is the basis for subordinating the part to the whole; it is the prerequisite to insuring the accomplishment of a strategic task. The victory of the revolutionary war is won by the commanders and fighters of the entire army united under the leadership of the Party. Without the unity among the various parts, we would not have won the revolutionary war, nor would we have achieved success in all fields of work. All departments and branches must proceed from the

interests of the overall revolutionary situation, respect, help and assist one another, raise the problem of unity to the level of the overall revolutionary situation, and make still bigger contributions to socialist revolution and construction.

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Questions and Answers About Capitalist Economic Crisis

(Hsüeh-hsi yü P'i-p'an /Study and Criticism/, No. 1, January 10, 1975)

At present, the storm of a new economic crisis is violently pounding at the entire capitalist world. It has caused and will further cause political and social crises in the imperialist countries, shaking the already battered imperialist system. As Lenin said, "Imperialism is the eve of social revolution of the proletariat." ("Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism") It is important to use the Marxist viewpoint to study the capitalist economic crisis, expose imperialism and criticize revisionism in order to understand more clearly the reactionary and decadent nature of the capitalist system and to show a greater love for our incomparably superior socialist system. The following questions and answers are written on the basis of discussions on problems raised in the course of study by many worker-peasant-soldier theoretical groups. They can be said to be a record of the discussion of problems relating to the capitalist economic crisis.

I. Capitalist Economic Crisis Is Crisis of Over-Production

A: In the capitalist world at present, there appear such phenomena as output slump, shrinking market and bank collapses. Some people attribute these to an economic crisis; others take a different view. How would you look at these?

B: I think that an economic crisis is breaking out in the major capitalist countries such as the United States, Britain, West Germany and Japan. In these countries the big capitalists, government leaders and their economists are all haunted by the phrase "economic crisis." Some say that these are "economic conditions of unusual depression and bust." Others say that this is not an economic crisis but "economic recession." There are also people who cannot but admit that "the present world crisis is a protracted crisis." Whether they acknowledge or deny it, the fact is that there is an economic crisis because it has a common feature unique to economic crises, that is, "over-production." When the crisis comes, the first signs are market depression, slackening business, and accumulation of unsold stocks. Judging by the recently disclosed statistics, the number of small cars sold in the United States in October 1974 dropped by 28 percent compared with the same period the year before last. Total inventories amounted to 240 billion US dollars in July 1974, showing an increase of 15 percent over the same period of the year before last. In Britain, industrial inventories by the end of 1973 rose by 660 million pounds over the same period of the year before last. Sales of such commodities as compact cars, washing machines and television sets dropped considerably. In London alone, some 100,000 newly-built apartments remained empty and could not be sold. In Japan, since February of 1974 the index of inventories of mining and industrial products continued to climb sharply for months running and by August it reached 131

percent (with 1970 taken as 100), setting the highest post-war record. In this connection, the inventory of cars already doubled the normal stocks to exceed a million units. The inventory of aluminum ignots was double in the period between January and September 1974. These few examples suffice to show the general situation. In spite of the great variety of signs of the outbreak of the economic crisis in capitalist countries, they all stem from the basic characteristic -- "over-production" -- of the crisis. It is therefore said that the capitalist economic crisis is a crisis of over-production.

A: Some people say that over-production means too many things are produced. Why does a crisis emerge because too many things are produced? Would you elaborate?

B: In a capitalist society, if too many things are produced, over-production will appear in time. Over-production is like the fuse of a string of firecrackers that has been lit and will necessarily lead to a chain of explosions. Owing to over-production, various capitalists vie with one another in dumping their stocks, and this will bring about the bankruptcies one after another of those relatively weak enterprises, particularly the middle-sized and small ones. In the United States there were 5,180 bankruptcies in the first half of 1974, showing a rise of 15.8 percent over the second half of the year before last. In Britain, the number of enterprises that went bankrupt or were wound up in the first half of 1974 exceeded 4,200 -- an increase of slightly over 900 over the corresponding period of the year before last. In Japan, the number of enterprises that collapsed in the first ten months of 1974 was 9,350, showing a rise of 45.6 percent over the comparable period of the year before last and exceeding the number of closures during the period of the previous crisis, namely, the whole of 1971. In West Germany, the number of bankrupt enterprises in the first nine months of 1974 exceeded 5,500, showing an increase of 42 percent over the same period of the year before last and setting the worst record since the War. Although some enterprises managed to stay in business, they operated with under-capacity to a serious extent. In the United States, for instance, the capacity rate had continued to decline since the beginning of 1974, and by the second quarter of the same year it had dropped to 80.6 percent; this means that nearly one-fifth of the production equipment has been allowed to lie idle. With closure of enterprises and under-capacity, the capitalists naturally take the workers as their first target, laying them off in large numbers, and as a result, large numbers of workers lose their jobs and turn vagrants in the street. The number of unemployed workers has kept on increasing by the month in the United States; it was 5,300,000 in September 1974, rose to 5,500,000 in October, and broke through the 6-million barrier in November, with the rate of unemployment standing as high as 6.5 percent. The number of unemployed British workers reached 626,000 in October 1974, setting the highest record for the successive crises since the War. In Japan, the number of unemployed workers rose drastically to 750,000 in October 1974, showing a rise of 210,000 over the same period of the year before last and with the rate of unemployment shooting up by 42 percent. Unemployed

workers in West Germany numbered 670,000 by the end of October 1974, showing an increase of 21 percent compared with the month of September in the same year.

Marketing difficulties, enterprise collapses and under-capacity will in turn cause output to decline by a big margin. From November 1973 to November 1974, US industrial production dropped by 4.3 percent, with the October car output going down by 32 percent compared with the same period of the year before last, and the number of residential homes completed in the third quarter of 1974 declined by 30 percent compared with the same period of the year before last. Japan's industrial output by August of 1974 went down by 9.6 percent compared with October of 1973, with car production dropping by 20 percent, machinery output by over 25 percent and the textile output by over 40 percent. In Britain industrial output in January 1974 declined by 10.2 percent compared with October 1973. In West Germany industrial output in July 1974 dropped by 17.3 percent compared with November 1973.

Closures of enterprises and under-capacity will also inevitably cause banks to go bankrupt and stock prices to fall. The 20th largest bank in the United States -- the Franklin National Bank of New York -- was forced to declare bankruptcy in September 1974. In West Germany, one of the biggest private banks -- the Hao-erh-shih-ta-te -- declared insolvency in June 1974, causing a great shock in Europe and the United States. Many so-called "marginal" banks appeared in Britain; for instance, the British Commercial Bank of Scotland, on the verge of bankruptcy due to a run by its depositors, has been acquired by the British National Ko-lin-te-lai Bank. The Chieh-sai-erh(Cheshire?) Security Company, one of the largest financial organizations in Britain, admitted in October 1974 that it was having difficulties due to insufficient cash flow and asked the London Stock Exchange to suspend the trading of its shares as it was also on the verge of bankruptcy. In November 1974, the Dow-Jones price index of 30 industrial stocks in the United States fell by 44 percent from its peak in January the year before last, this being the sharpest plunge in stock prices since the 1929-33 crisis. On December 11 the same year the prices of 30 principal industrial stocks in London dropped by 56 percent compared with the early part of the same year, reaching the lowest point in 20 years.

Regardless of whichever country where the capitalist economic crisis breaks out, the following phenomena generally appear in the various spheres of economic life: Enterprises collapse in large numbers, unemployment increases, industrial output declines, the market shrinks, stock prices fall, etc. These phenomena are caused by over-production directly or indirectly; they are the manifestations of over-production in other spheres of social and economic life. At present, in the major capitalist countries including the United States, Britain, West Germany and Japan, these phenomena have appeared and are being gradually exacerbated. These facts amply prove that "the imperialists have sunk into an irretrievable crisis." (Chairman Mao, "Speech at the Preparatory Meeting of the New Political Consultative Conference") But in order to cheat themselves

and others, some imperialist elements close their eyes to facts and do all they can to deny the existence of a grave economic crisis. This is sheer day-dreaming, they are wasting their time!

A: If the capitalist economic crisis is a crisis of over-production, is it true that they have really produced too many things? Is it true that there are more food grains produced than can be eaten, more clothing produced than can be worn, and more houses built than can be occupied?

B: Definitely not! As for the true state of capitalist production surplus, there was a vivid description of it as early as in the 1930's.

The son of a coalminer asked his mother:

"It's so cold now; why don't you make a fire in the stove?"

The mother replied:

"Because we have no coal. Your Papa has lost his job, and we can't afford coal."

"Mama! Why did Papa lose his job?"

"Because too much coal is produced."

This dialogue that took place in a US coalminer's home tells us that over-production in capitalist countries is only relative and not absolute. It is still true today. In two days, July 15 and 16, 1974, A-te-hsi-ya Milk Company of Los Angeles and the State of California in the United States poured more than 38,000 gallons of high-quality fresh milk down the drain. Why? Because "no market could be found for this milk." But on the other hand, the price of fresh milk on the market had soared by 84.6 percent since 1967, and many poor people could not afford milk because of its high price. Some people, through the so-called charitable organizations, appealed to the monopoly capitalists to use this milk to relieve the hungry, particularly the newly-born babies. However, the monopoly capitalists did not spare one drop of the milk, and these people could only look at the milk in despair. This incident shows that capitalist over-production does not really mean in a real sense that too many things are produced, only that over-production is not absolute but relative. These surplus products are "surplus" only in relation to the purchasing power of vast masses of the laboring people.

The capitalist relations of production are relations marked by capitalist brutal exploitation of workers. The purchasing power of the worker masses is extremely low. Once an economic crisis breaks out, large numbers of enterprises will go under, and huge groups of workers would become unemployed with their purchasing power further reduced. During

the period of the crisis, various absurd phenomena would inevitably emerge: On the one hand, the capitalists are destroying huge quantities of food; on the other, the vast masses of the laboring people are suffering from hunger. On the one hand, the capitalists are burning huge quantities of cloth; on the other, the vast masses of the laboring people are suffering from cold. During the present crisis, while the US capitalists have poured milk down the drain, people in the slum areas are struggling on the brink of starvation. In London some 100,000 newly-completed flats cannot be sold, but on the other hand, workers by the thousands have to sleep in the street. This situation is visible everywhere in the capitalist world. This more than anything else testifies to the observation made by Marx a century ago: "The fact is not that too much means of livelihood is produced in relation to the existing population. Quite the contrary. Too little of it is produced to enable the masses of people to live a decent life." ("Capital")

A: Since over-production in capitalist countries is not absolute but relative over-production and since too little rather than too much means of livelihood is produced, why is it that the capitalists would rather pour the milk down the drain, burn the food and leave the houses vacant? Would it be better for them to sell the produce at cheaper prices and lease the houses at lower rates?

B: Right, and how absurd these things look to us! They appear incomprehensible. However, if we make an analysis with the theoretical weapon of Marxism, we will understand such ridiculous phenomena under the capitalist system. Marx said: "The surplus value or profit of production is the absolute law of this mode of production." ("Capital") The purpose of capitalist production is to make money. Particularly after capitalism entered the monopolistic stage, monopoly capitalists have had a bigger appetite for profits; what they are after is monopoly super profit. Whether a capitalist decides to sell or destroy his surplus products depends on whether one of the either actions can guarantee him the maximum monopoly profit. Supposing he has a million pairs of socks to be sold for one dollar per pair. But he can only sell 700,000 pairs for 700,000 dollars. If he can sell all of them by reducing the price to 90 cents per pair, he will receive 900,000 dollars -- 200,000 dollars more. Under these circumstances, he would, under the trick of "sales below cost," sell all the socks and would not burn one single pair of socks. However, this is not always the case. Though he cuts the price, he still may not boost his sales much. Let's use the above example again by way of illustration. If the price per pair is reduced from one dollar to 90 cents and the volume of sales is increased from 700,000 to 750,000 pairs, his sales are increased, but not much. In that case, he would net only 675,000 dollars, representing a reduction compared with the original receipt of 700,000 dollars. In these circumstances, he would, proceeding from the viewpoint of profit, maintain the original price and burn the rest of the socks that cannot be sold. Perhaps some people may ask: Wouldn't it be better to keep the socks that cannot be sold in the warehouse instead of destroying them in fire? But the question is: some products are easily perishable and cannot be

stored for a relatively long period of time. Although some products are not easily perishable, if they are kept in the warehouse for a long time, storage charges would have to be met; if they are kept in the warehouse for one more day, more expenses would have to be paid. Weighing the gain and loss, the capitalist would think that it would be more justified to burn or discard his products. Therefore, in the period of a crisis, the destruction of huge quantities of goods by the capitalists is determined by the profit-motivated class nature of the capitalist class. As Stalin pointed out, "If capitalism could adapt production not to the obtaining of the utmost profit, but to the systematic improvement of the material conditions of the masses of the people, and if it could turn profits not to the satisfaction of the whims of the parasitic classes, not to perfecting the methods of exploitation, not to the export of capital, but to the systematic improvement of the material conditions of the workers and peasants, then there would be no crises. But then capitalism would not be capitalism." ("Political Report of the Central Committee to the 16th Congress of the CPSU (B)")

A: What you have said about over-production concerns only over-production of the means of livelihood. In Japan recently the inventories of steel products reached 6-7 million tons, setting "the highest record in history." How would you look at this over-production of the means of production?

B: This is a good question. Over-production in capitalist countries, apart from that of the means of livelihood as discussed above, also concerns over-production of the means of production. How can there be a surplus of the means of production? This surplus is closely related to the surplus of the means of livelihood. If his cars or bicycles cannot be sold, the capitalist would not have the money to buy steel products. Even if he has the money, he would not use it for a losing business, let alone opening another car or bicycle plant. If many factories have been closed down and those that have not been closed down face a serious problem of under-capacity, which capitalist would be willing to purchase new equipment to expand production? This then inevitably causes a surplus of the means of production. What is the nature of this over-production of the means of production? It is still a kind of relative over-production. However, this is not because the capitalist lacks purchasing power but because if he buys the means of production for production or for expanded production, he would not make any profit or at best can make only a little profit. In these circumstances, not only would he not purchase any new production equipment, but sometimes in order to insure maximum profit, he would even reduce production and destroy a part of the means of production. During the economic crisis that broke out in the 1930's, many capitalist countries destroyed large numbers of blast furnaces for steel refining. The United States destroyed 92; Britain, 28; and France, 10. But at the same time, some 30-40 million workers lost their jobs. If the purpose of production were not to create surplus value but to insure the improvement of the living standards of the whole people, there would not be any surplus of the means

of production. This means that in capitalist countries the constant appearance of over-production of the means of production seems to suggest that too much means of production is produced, but speaking in terms of fully developing production and satisfying the requirements, there is shortage instead of over-abundance.

Such manifestations of capitalist economic crisis show in a concentrated manner that the development of the social productive forces "exceeds" the capacity of absorption by the capitalist relations of production. During the period of economic crisis, the capitalist class is obliged to resort to destructive violence not only to destroy the surplus products but also to directly destroy the productive forces in order to tide over the crisis temporarily by coercive means. Stalin said: "A system of economy that does not know what to do with its 'superfluous' goods and is obliged to burn them at a time when want and unemployment, hunger and ruin reign among the masses -- such a system of economy pronounces its own death sentence." ("Political Report of the Central Committee to the 16th Congress of the CPSU (B)") Today, in order to intricate themselves from economic crisis, big capitalists in such countries as the United States, Britain and Japan have again resorted to the methods of pouring milk down the drain and burning cloth, and this pronounces a death sentence on the capitalist system. The death-knell for the capitalist system has sounded louder and louder.

A: The "Communist Manifesto" says: "In these crises there breaks out an epidemic that, in all earlier epochs, would have seemed an absurdity -- the epidemic of over-production." Does it mean that the economic crisis of over-production is only a phenomenon unique to capitalist society?

B: Yes, only capitalist society can produce such an absurdity as the crisis of over-production. The remarks made by Marx and Engels have not only ruthlessly exposed the endless sufferings capitalist economic crises bring to society but also shown us an extremely important problem: The economic crisis of over-production is something that had never existed in all societies of the past and is a phenomenon peculiar to capitalist society.

In an analysis of commodity circulation, Marx said that the separation of buying and selling due to the appearance of currency gave rise to the possibility of crisis, but that was only a possibility. The reason was that in slave society commodity production was not quite developed. By the feudal society, though commodity production and commodity exchanges had developed to a certain extent, there was still petty commodity production. The purpose of the petty commodity producer in carrying out production was mainly to satisfy his own needs, and for him selling his products was for the purpose of buying the products he needed, that is, to sell in order to buy. At the same time, under the conditions of simple commodity production, the level of the productive forces was very low, the scale of production was limited, and the quantity of products produced was not large. Even though the petty producer

sometimes could not sell his products and might go bankrupt as a result, this was after all caused by local dislocations and could not possibly give rise to a crisis of over-production in society as a whole.

Before the advent of capitalist society, although shocks might occur frequently in social and economic life, such shocks were often caused by certain unusual natural calamities or man-made disasters, which disrupted production and caused shortages of products. In feudal society, for instance, due to serious natural calamities, due to brutal exploitation and oppression of peasants by the landlord class or due to prolonged warfare, the economic life of a country might become gravely paralyzed and chaotic, with large tracts of land lying waste and the laboring people suffering from hunger and cold and broken homes. But this was totally different from the economic crisis of capitalist over-production.

Perhaps some people may ask: Since crises of over-production did not exist in society before the advent of capitalism, how should we view the two verses -- "While wine and meat become mildewed in a rich man's home, outside in the street there are bodies of people who died of hunger and cold"? As a matter of fact, such a situation only shows the excessive and extravagant consumption by the rich. "Wine and meat become mildewed" definitely does not mean over-production; it is only the result of the fact that a handful of exploiters controlled by far the greater portion of the extremely limited social products at the time and squandered them away shamelessly.

The economic crisis of over-production is a crisis peculiar to capitalist society. In colonial and semi-colonial countries under imperialist enslavement, their economies are principally feudal or semi-feudal. Although the capitalist economy may develop somewhat there, yet due to oppression by foreign imperialist and domestic feudal-comprador forces, serious obstacles are imposed on the development of the national capitalist industry, and the development of the productive forces is very slow. Therefore, generally speaking, economic crises of over-production would not be caused by the internal factors of these countries. This being so, how should we view such phenomena as collapses of business concerns, unemployment among workers and accumulated inventories of commodities that constantly appeared in old China? Indeed, such phenomena were frequent occurrences in old China. Many of our old workers had suffered greatly from unemployment in the old society. But the appearance of such phenomena in colonies and semi-colonies was brought about by dumping, export of capital and shifting of crisis onto others by the imperialist countries, while these colonies and semi-colonies were under the rule and influence of imperialism.

The economic crisis of over-production is a social epidemic peculiar to capitalist society, and its source lies in the all-evil capitalist system.

II. The Capitalist System Is the Source of Economic Crises

A: As you have just said, the source of economic crises is the capitalist system. For some time, however, the two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, have been yelling that the current economic crisis is caused by increased oil prices charged by the Arab countries. Some people view such an allegation as a fraud; but there are also people who say that there are some reasons for saying the oil price hike has caused the crisis. Which view is correct?

B: The two hegemonic powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, attribute the current capitalist world economic crisis to increased oil prices charged by the Arab countries. This is a specious allegation, designed to create public opinion for shoving the crisis onto others.

Let us first take a look at history. The history of capitalist economic crises, if counted from the first general crisis of over-production in Britain in 1825, has up to now covered one and a half centuries. In this period a great number of economic crises have broken out in various capitalist countries. Let's leave aside the economic crises that had occurred in various capitalist countries before the First and Second World Wars. Since the end of the Second World War alone, the United States and Britain have experienced six economic crises and Japan has experienced seven. As everyone is aware, the Arab countries raised their oil prices only after the fourth Middle East war in October 1973. Before the oil price rise, the capitalist society had gone through one economic crisis after another. To describe the oil price hike as the cause of the capitalist economic crisis is to try to explain a phenomenon that has recurred time and again over the past century and so with the events that have taken place only in recent years. How can anyone be fooled by this?

Let us now take a look at the present situation. If the current economic crisis were caused by the oil price rise, then over-production and output slump should have first occurred in those production sectors that are closely related to oil. However, opposite is the case. Take the United States for example. The sharpest decline in the current crisis occurred in its building industry. In September 1974 production dropped by 56 percent compared with January 1973, and the building industry is one sector that does not bear a close relationship to oil. Moreover, the slump in the US building industry began as early as August 1973, that is, two months before the Arab oil prices were increased. How can it be linked to the oil price rise? Taking the capitalist economy as a whole, although the oil price rise might in varying degrees increase the production costs of various economic sectors and in different degrees affect the prices of various kinds of products, yet on the whole the money spent on oil accounts for only a little more than one percent of the total industrial cost. Isn't it ridiculous to ascribe the cause of the current general economic crisis of over-production to the rise in oil prices?

A: According to what you have said, you do not endorse the latter view /the economic crisis has been caused by the oil price hike in some respects/. In that case, may I ask: In his speech at the Special Session of the UN General Assembly in 1974, Comrade Teng Hsiao-p'ing said that the increase in oil prices was "fine and correct." How could you explain this?

B: I think that the cause of the current crisis is not the rise in oil prices. But the struggle waged by the Arab countries using oil as a weapon -- such as raising the oil prices, reducing oil output, imposing an oil embargo and nationalizing the oil industries -- has indeed dealt a serious blow to the imperialist economy, which has been a fine and correct thing to do. Imperialism has lived on cheap raw materials taken from Asia, Africa and Latin America. Today, the countries of the vast Third World in Asia, Africa and Latin America have awakened and united together. In order to safeguard their national sovereignty, it is completely just for them to control their national resources in their own hands, something that imperialism has forced them to do. It fills one with indignation to recall that for a long time imperialist countries have seized oil from Arab countries at cheap prices. In the 60 years since 1913, the prices of industrial goods of the imperialist countries soared by many times, yet the price of the Middle East oil was all along held at about two US dollars per barrel and was more or less unchanged. Cheap oil gave monopoly capital in the imperialist countries billions of US dollars in super profits but caused endless hardships to the Arab countries and people. The oil struggle initiated in October 1973 has severely punished the Israeli Zionists and their supporters -- the imperialist hegemonists. Is it something that ought not to be done? The oil price rise has to a certain extent caused many imperialist countries huge deficits in their international payment balances, but this can only show the fragility of the capitalist economic system: when they cannot plunder and exploit wilfully the Asian, African and Latin American countries in the same way as they did before, they face a hard time. The oil price rise is something without precedent in the struggle waged by the Arab countries in their struggle against imperialism, colonialism and hegemonism; it has greatly boosted the morale of the Third World countries and peoples and considerably deflated the arrogance of imperialism. What an excellent thing it is!

However, the rise in oil prices is not the source of the current capitalist world economic crisis. It is nothing but a plot for the imperialists and the modern revisionists to describe the oil price hike as the source of the current economic crisis. They vainly attempt to turn the anger of the broad masses of the people at the all-evil capitalist system against the Arab countries, as though the capitalist system would not produce economic crises and today's crisis were entirely the responsibility of the Arab states and people. Such a trick of "taking a deer for a horse" is extremely mean and definitely will not pay.

A: That the oil struggle is an excellent thing is relatively clear, but what is not so clear is why the capitalist system inevitably

produces economic crises and how such and how such crises come to pass. Please elaborate on this?

B: The capitalist economic crisis, in the final analysis, is produced by the basic contradiction of capitalism, namely the contradiction between socialized production and the capitalist private ownership.

Socialized production has developed under the capitalist system. In feudal society, in both industry and agriculture, production was on an individual basis. Each family was taken as a production unit and the course of production was basically a series of activities by individuals. There is a great distinction between socialized production and individual production. In the first place, the means of production can no longer be used by a single individual alone. In small workshops of handicraftsmen in feudal society, such simple and indigenous tools as hand spindle and pedal loom could be operated by a single person. In the course of capitalist socialized large-scale production, a great variety of machines such as the scutcher, the spinner and the weaving machine and the large and small motors that propel these machines form a mammoth mechanical system that has to be manned by several hundred or thousand or even up to ten thousand persons together. Second, the social ties in the course of production have been rendered even closer. In the course of capitalist socialized large-scale production, not only is there an extremely fine division of work within a factory, but there are close mutual ties between the various production sectors in society as a whole. Production is no longer the action of individuals but the social action of mutual division of work and cooperation among laborers throughout society. For instance, within a textile mill there are various workshops handling scutching, steel wiring, joint connecting, rough spinning, fine spinning, weaving, wrapping, and machinery repair, with the workers doing separate jobs and coordinating with one another in the various workshops. It is through their joint labor that cotton cloth is produced. At the same time, the textile mill has to be supplied with cotton from the rural areas, power from electricity generating plants, and machinery and equipment from textile machinery plants. The production of electricity generating and textile machinery plants is closely related to the coal mining, steel refining and other production sectors. Actually, in the course of socialized large-scale production, production of society as a whole has become an integral whole, and the dislocation of any one link would significantly affect other sectors. Third, the products produced are also fruits of joint labor of a series of factories and enterprises, workshops and work procedures; they are no longer the fruits of labor of individuals. As Engels said, "Today, yarn, cloth and metal products produced in factories are the joint products of many workers. It must be through their hands in a number of procedures that finished products can be turned out. None of the workers can say: 'This is made by me. This is my product.'" ("Anti-Dühring")

Under the capitalist system, although production is socialized, the means of production and the fruits of labor do not belong to social public ownership but to capitalist private ownership. Such capitalist

private ownership is contradictory to socialized production. Socialized production shows the characteristics of social productive forces under capitalist conditions, that capitalist private ownership is the basis and the most fundamental thing of the capitalist relations of production. Therefore, the contradiction between socialized production and capitalist private ownership becomes the concentrated expression of the contradiction between the capitalist relations of production and the productive forces, and is the basic contradiction of capitalism. The economic crisis of over-production is precisely induced by this basic contradiction.

A: In that case, how is the contradiction between socialized production and capitalist private ownership manifested? How does it lead to economic crisis of over-production? Please be more specific about this.

B: After capitalist industry turned from workshop handicraft production to big machine production, socialized production has fully developed, giving production the possibility of rapid expansion. Under conditions of individual production, even if the sources of raw materials and market demands were available, production could not possibly expand rapidly as it was carried out bit by bit through manual labor. Under conditions of socialized large-scale production, fine division of work and the application of machinery makes the rapid expansion of production possible provided supply of raw materials is assured and there is a market demand. In Britain, during the period of capitalist ascent, steel output was 100,000 tons in 1868, jumped to a million tons in 1878 and then to 3.35 million tons in 1888. Dealing with the enormous expansive force of capitalist large-scale industry, Engels pointed out graphically: "Compared with it, the expansive force of gases is mere child's play." ("Anti-Dühring")

Capitalist private ownership makes production subordinate to the capitalist desire to seek the maximum profit. To make the highest profit, capitalists will do all they can to expand production. As long as there is a market for their products, they will use a thousand and one means to increase production to boost their profits. At the same time, in pursuit of the highest profit, they will also exploit their workers as much as possible by increasing the working hours, making labor more intense and keeping wages low. Therefore, the capitalist pursuit of maximum profits will naturally result in ever increasing production of things, but on the other hand, they leave the workers no money to buy these things and reduce their purchasing power to a very low level. Thus, the contradiction between socialized production and capitalist private ownership is manifested as a contradiction between the trend toward enormous increase of production and the relative contraction of the purchasing power of the laboring people, thereby making the economic crisis of over-production inevitable. Marx said: "The ultimate cause of all actual crises is always the poverty of the masses of the people and their restricted consumption. But on the other hand, the impulse of capitalist production is to develop the productive forces regardless of the

consequences, as if only the absolute consumption capacity of society sets the limit to the productive forces." ("Capital") Take the United States as an example. Its previous crisis took place between 1969 and 1970. Beginning from 1972, its fixed asset investments increased enormously. In 1972 they rose by 7.2 billion US dollars over 1971; in 1973 they again rose by 11.3 billion US dollars over 1972, showing the biggest increase in fixed capital in one year since the War. The drastic growth of fixed capital illustrated the rapid inflation of the productive capacity. Yet in the 20 months since 1973, the real wages of American workers declined by 6.5 percent. As you can imagine, the laboring masses account for the bulk of the population of the capitalist society, but the capitalists, while expanding production, cause the laboring masses to live in a state of poverty. In this way, how can there not be a relative surplus of goods produced in huge quantities?

A: The motivation of the capitalists is profit, but when over-production appears and the desired profit cannot be achieved, can they not reduce production in order to prevent a surplus?

B: Right, the capitalists can only do so under given conditions. But here there is one problem, and that is that the contradiction between socialized production and capitalist ownership is manifested as a contradiction between organized production in individual factories and anarchic production in society as a whole.

In the case of capitalist socialized production, judging by the individual enterprises, there is a set of very strict controls over production. This is because under conditions of capitalist ownership, every factory is the private property of a capitalist or a capitalist group. The capitalist is the owner of the enterprise. Although there may be thousands of workers in it, they are all hired slaves of the capitalist and are dominated by him or his agent. Each does a job he is told to do -- operating the machine, doing repairs, feeding the boiler. Hence, production is organized within an enterprise. On the other hand, judging by the society as a whole, as thousands upon thousands of factories are owned separately by different capitalists or capitalist groups and as capitalists, big and small, "each rule under their own roofs," production in society as a whole cannot be organized nor planned, but is anarchic.

Although production in capitalist society as a whole is anarchic, yet there is interdependence and close coordination between various enterprises and production sectors. How can such ties be established between various enterprises? These are established through market transactions. As there is a considerable degree of blindness in capitalist organization of production, it is impossible for him to know in advance how great is the social demand for his products. And as capitalists "keep their secrets" from one another, it is equally difficult for him to ascertain the amount of similar products that will be produced by other capitalists in the same industries. What should be produced and how much should be produced entirely depends on the rise and fall in market prices. If

prices go up and the profits are great, the capitalists will expand their production; if prices fall and the profits are small, they will reduce their production. Therefore, judging by society as a whole, capitalist production is like "a blind man riding a blind horse"; it is impossible for him to find out in advance whether his products can be sold or not. So far as the profit-motivated capitalist is concerned, his activities are dictated solely by the rise or fall in prices and the increase or decrease of profits.

When market prices appear to be rising, the industrial capitalists will do their utmost to expand production, capitalists in commerce will do their best to build up their stocks, and the capitalists of banks will give the capitalists in industry and commerce large amounts of credits in order to help expand industrial and commercial activities. The market appears booming. Actually, at this time factors of over-production are being gradually accumulated but are only temporarily covered up by the false purchasing power generated by the commercial, credit and speculative activities in the midst of competition and anarchic production. The more competition and anarchic production develop, the more blindly social production as a whole will expand. The false purchasing power will eventually fail to cover up the real relatively shrinking purchasing power of the laboring people. When stocks pile up and cannot be marketed, contradictions come to the surface. At this time, merchants and bankers will apply their brakes immediately. Capitalists in commerce not only will cease huge purchases, but will dump their large accumulated stocks. The bankers not only will not issue a large number of new loans, but will recall their old loans from the capitalists in industry and commerce, thereby forcing the latter to either contract their production and business activities or close their enterprises. As a consequence, production declines drastically, unemployment increases steeply, market sales become stagnant, stock prices plummet, and the economic crisis of over-production sweeps across like a tempest. However, the bourgeois economists, dictated by their class instinct, cannot recognize and are unwilling to face squarely the basic contradiction of the capitalist system; instead, racking their brains they cook up some "theories" to deceive the public. One of these theories is to attribute the cause of the current economic crisis to the oil price hike.

A: You have enlightened me on this point. When we use the Marxist viewpoint to study the economic crisis, we must criticize the bourgeoisie and revisionism. Could you tell me which bourgeois and revisionist fallacies concerning the economic crises we should criticize with special emphasis?

B: There are a good many fallacies presented by the bourgeoisie and revisionism in defense of capitalist economic crises. Some are extremely absurd, others are just specious. We should recognize them and criticize them deeply with the Marxist viewpoint.

In the past, the bourgeoisie had dished up the so-called "sun spot" theory, holding that economic crisis was caused by the appearance of a large black spot on the sun. As the black spot on the sun appeared once in about ten years, so the economic crisis also appeared once in about a decade. How could the appearance of a large black spot on the sun cause an economic crisis on earth? It was said that once the black spot n the sun appeared, farm production on earth would decline and this would in turn bring about a reduction in industrial output and cause an economic crisis. Such a theory which linked certain natural phenomena of the heavenly body with the social phenomena on earth was nothing but a reprint of Tung Chung-shu's "theory of interaction between Heaven and man." The very fact that the bourgeoisie had the nerve to cook up such an absurd "theory" shows that this class is really like "the sun setting in the western hills or a patient breathing his last."

Among the bourgeois theories concerning economic crisis, there is also the "theory of under-consumption," which was rather popular at one time. This was a specious theory. What this "theory of under-consumption" means is that inadequate demand for consumer goods is blamed as the source of the over-production crisis. Isn't it true that over-production is caused by the fact that a lot of commodities are unsold? Isn't it true that the fact that commodities cannot be sold is due to the low purchasing power of the masses? This being the case, isn't the "theory of under-consumption" quite logical? Actually, while there exists the fact of under-consumption in capitalist society, why does under-consumption appear? This question has not been answered. As Marx pointed out, in the capitalist society "it is purely a repetition of the synonym to say that the crisis is caused by lack of consumption with paying ability or lack of consumers with paying ability." ("Capital") To explain the economic crisis of capitalist over-production with the lack of consumption with paying ability is tantamount to explaining the hunger of the broad masses of workers in capitalist society with the "lack of food in the stomach"; it does not help us in the slighest to understand the root-cause of the economic crisis. Under-consumption was a phenomenon that had existed in various class societies before capitalist society, but there had never been any economic crisis of over-production before the advent of capitalism. It can be seen that the "theory of under-consumption" cannot basically explain the cause of capitalist economic crises.

There may be thousands of crisis theories cooked up by the bourgeoisie, yet their common aim is to attempt to cover up the basic contradiction of capitalism, to make it appear that the crisis is caused by certain external factors that have no connection with the capitalist system. Chairman Mao points out: "The basic cause of development of a thing lies not outside but inside the thing, in the contradictoriness within the thing." ("On Contradiction") The source of economic crises can only be sought from the capitalist system, from the basic contradiction

of capitalism. As long as the capitalist system exists, the source of economic crises remains. To stamp out economic crises it is necessary to destroy the capitalist system. (To be continued)

(The first section of this dialogue is written by Yü T'i-chün and Ch'ou Hsiao-ch'ün; the second section by Cheng Shu-ch'ing and Hsüan Ling-ling.)

* * *

Read and Study Seriously, Penetratingly Criticize Lin Piao and Confucius

- How did we study Debate on Salt and Iron?

by

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(Hsüeh-hsi yü P'i-p'an [Study and Criticism], No. 12, December 14, 1974)

Summing up valuable experience in history and finding out things that are governed by laws when studying the history of the Confucian-Legalist struggle and class struggle as a whole is an important aspect of deepening the criticism of Lin Piao and Confucius. To do so with conscientious effort, according to our understanding from the study of Debate on Salt and Iron (hereafter Debate) sometime ago, the key lies in a serious study of Marxist-Leninist works and Chairman Mao's writings. This means "using the Marxist method to give a critical summation" so as to "make the past serve the present" in the real sense of the phrase.

The debate on salt and iron occurred in the mid-Western Han period when the Confucianists and Legalists started a major controversy about the advantages and disadvantages regarding the question of government monopolies in the vital industries of salt and iron. To correctly sum up and assimilate the historical experience of this struggle, we organized the theoretical study group to study seriously with the worker masses Chairman Mao's brilliant work On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People (hereafter Handling of Contradictions). We then analyzed the salt and iron controversy on the basis of Chairman Mao's writings relating to the analysis of socialist society's basic contradictions and unceasing consolidation and perfection of socialist relations of production.

The controversy between Sang Hung-yang and the literati at the salt and iron conference appeared to be one that was concerned with the merit or demerit of government control of salt and iron and whether it should be retained or abolished. Substantively, however, it involved the issue of keeping to the feudal system of ownership based on the centralization of state power or restoration of the system of ownership resting on the slave owners. The literati clamored for abolition of the salt and iron monopolies for the sole purpose of restoring the system of owning the salt and iron industries by the slave owners in commerce and industry. They vainly tried to replace the feudal system of ownership based on the centralization of state authority and wreck the economic foundation of feudal society which had just been established in order to prepare conditions for restoring the slave system completely. On the other hand, the struggle between Sang Hung-yang and the literati was one aimed at depriving the slave owners in industry and commerce of the means of production whereby they could control the salt and iron industries, consolidating newly emerging feudal relations of production and eliminating the remnant forces of the

relations of production based on the slave system. This development illustrates that the establishment and consolidation of any new relations of production would necessarily be accompanied by serious struggles between restoration and counter-restoration. The same holds true today in respect of Lin Piao's practice of "restraining oneself and returning to propriety," an attempt aimed at vainly trying to restore the capitalist system of ownership in socialist China so China would regress to the abyss of a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society. This struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, rising and subsiding, waxing and waning at times, would encompass the entire course of socialist society.

In the article Handling of Contradictions, Chairman Mao pointed out: "Unification of the state, unity among the people and solidarity of different nationalities in the country provides the basic guarantee for the certain victory of our cause." Only by keeping to a centralized and unified political line can a revolutionary class consolidate and develop new relations of production. The literati representing the interests of the remnant forces of the slave owners directed their attacks in the salt and iron conference at the government monopolies and other economic policies with the sinister intention of altering the Legalist political line favoring centralization and unification and thus undermining the feudal relations of production based on the system of centralization of state power. This reactionary fallacy was sternly criticized by Sang Hung-yang, political representative of the newly rising landlord class, who explained the great significance of the policy of exercising government control of salt and iron to the political line of upholding centralization and unification. He contended that government control of salt and iron industries was not solely intended to increase the revenues of the state but was more specifically designed to uproot disruptions and restoration in the economic foundations. After summing up the controversy at the salt and iron conference, we came to realize that those who practiced restoration and regression and vainly tried to restore the old relations of production would invariably bring about a split organizationally. We also observed that the newly rising class in an attempt to consolidate and develop new relations of production would assuredly keep to the political line in favor of centralization and unification. The renegade and traitor Lin Piao formed a counter-revolutionary "combined fleet" in a futile attempt to set up another Central Committee and split our Party and the state for the sole purpose of restoring capitalism. However, his conspiracy would never be successful. Under the leadership of Chairman Mao and the Communist Party, socialist new China has today truly carried out a political line stressing centralization and unification, completely freeing itself from a state of divisions and disorder detested by the people. Whoever turns back to take the road of split and regression will be spurned by the people.

To keep to centralization and unification, it is necessary to carry out struggle in the superstructure. Chairman Mao has pointed out: "The settlement of the issue of which -- socialism or capitalism -- will win out in the ideological sphere in our country still requires a fairly long period of time." "If one has an inadequate understanding of this situation or understands nothing at all, he will make the gravest mistake and ignore the necessary ideological struggle." Chairman Mao's teaching

has illustrated the importance of criticizing the old ideas, the old culture, and old customs and habits in the superstructure after the proletariat has seized political power. The restorationist activities of the remnant forces of the slave owners at the salt and iron conference, aimed at undermining the feudal relations of produced based on the centralization of state power, were first unfolded in the ideological sphere. At the start of the meeting they invoked Confucius and trumpeted the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius as being "immutable through the succeeding ages," advocating an ideological line that stressed the past rather than the present and favored a return to the old order and regression. It was Sang Hung-yang who had divined their real intentions. He pointed out that their opinions represented "emptiness to confound substance" so they could undermine the landlord class system of centralized power and serve the restorationist cause of the slave owners. By unmasking Confucius, venerable master of the Confucianists, and calling him "overbearing," "avaricious," "stupid" and "indecent," Sang Hung-yang unrelentingly uncovered and repudiated the restorationist forces of the slave owners in the ideological sphere. In the context of the historical experience of the Confucian-Legalist struggle at the salt and iron conference, to consolidate and develop new relations of production it would be necessary to carry out class struggle in the ideological sphere and repudiate the ideology of the old and declining classes. We must therefore continue to popularize, deepen and unfold in a sustained manner the struggle to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius, use Marxism to occupy the superstructure as a whole and foster socialist new things. Only by doing so can we further consolidate and develop the fine situation and strengthen proletarian dictatorship.

In Handling of Contradictions, Chairman Mao pointed out: "In socialist society the basic contradictions are still those between the relations of production and productive forces and those between the superstructure and its economic base." He stressed the need to resolve these contradictions. Chairman Mao's teaching has illustrated the protracted struggle to consolidate and develop new relations of production. Studying Debate with this observation in mind, we can perceive the protracted nature of the struggle between restoration and counter-restoration. From the Shang Yang reform at the time of Duke Hsiao of Ch'in to Ch'in Shih Huang's unification of China, acute struggles between the forces for restoration and those against it had encompassed more than a hundred years. Similarly, during the 140 years from the founding of the Ch'in empire to the salt and iron conference in the mid-Western Han, the struggles centering round the establishment and consolidation of the newly emerging feudal system were equally staggering and uninterrupted. Hence, several generations or more of endeavors are required before a new system can be established and consolidated. Since the proletarian revolution is a "revolution aimed at finally eliminating any system of exploitation and any class," it is more profound and more thoroughgoing than all previous social revolutions. After the proletariat has seized political power it must therefore guard as fully as possible against the counter-revolutionary restorationist activities carried out in different forms by the exploiting classes, in particular against the usurpation and restorationist intrigues

of careerists and conspirators of the landlord and bourgeois classes who have sneaked into the inner organs of proletarian dictatorship.

The course of deepening the combat in criticism of Lin Piao and Confucius tells us that reading and studying seriously and avidly poring over Marxist-Leninist works and Chairman Mao's writings holds the key to propelling the movement to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius forward. Only by studying seriously can we repudiate penetratingly. Practice has proved that whether one is serious or not in the study of Marxist-Leninist works and Chairman Mao's writings in the movement to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius can bring forth vastly different results. When our workshop commenced the study of the history of the Confucian-Legalist struggle, it will be recalled, some comrades who had read Legalist works such as Questioning Confucius and The Five Vermin developed a sense of frustration because they were at a loss to come upon anything having something to do with laws beyond the struggle between moving forward and turning backward. This sense of frustration would persist, they reasoned, even if they turned to Debate. Studying Handling of Contradictions, however, provided these comrades with a theoretical weapon. With enhanced understanding, they realized they should use the Marxist viewpoint to correctly sum up the historical experience of the Confucian-Legalist struggle from different historical periods in relation to the question of how to make the past serve the present. The workers closely linked the study of Handling of Contradictions and Debate with actual current struggles and this increased their awareness of consolidating and perfecting the socialist relations of production. On the basis of the basic law governing the unity of opposites, everybody had a firm grasp of the struggle between proletarian and bourgeois ideas in the ideological sphere. This greatly improved revolutionary unity, forged closer cadre-worker ties and harmonized coordination among the workers. With all the positive factors thus further mobilized and socialist activism of the vast numbers of the workers awakened, the workshop fulfilled one month in advance the production plans of the state for the whole year. A flourishing scene prevailed in both revolution and production.

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On Shang Yang's View of the State

- Reading the chapter on Hua-ts'e

by

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Hua-ts'e (画 策) or Making Stratagems (hereafter referred to as Stratagems), one of the chapters continued in Shang-chün Shu (商君书) or the Book of Lord Shang, is a most important political treatise. It expounds in clearcut terms the views on the state of the newly rising landlord class represented by outstanding Legalist Shang Yang by affirming the progressive role of revolutionary violence. In avowing the absoluteness of having the dictatorship of the declining slave-owning nobles replaced by the newly rising landlord class dictatorship, it provided a powerful ideological weapon for the use of revolutionary violence by the landlord class to uproot the slave system and establish and consolidate the feudal system.

I

The question of the state has always been the focus of contention between individual antagonistic classes. "Because this is related to the primary and fundamental problems of politics as a whole" (Lenin: On the State), involving the basic interests of survival and destruction of the individual classes.

Fiercely pounded by the stormy peasant uprisings in the last year of the Spring and Autumn period, the collapse of the slave society and the substitution of the newly rising feudal system for the old slave system became an irresistible historical tide. At the time the slave owners and the slaves had opposite views regarding the coming into being of the state and whether or not the state structure and institutions would change and develop. The former did their best to uphold the "divine right of kings" embodied in the "Heavenly mandate" theory, extolling the Chou ruler as the son of Heaven and contending that his right to rule was unshakable. In the face of the changing situation in which "the rites has collapsed and music has been destroyed," Confucius, a spokesman for the slave owners, looked upon history as becoming less and less desirable and spread the idea of regression in his view of history. He divided the state into three stages of development called "universal harmony," "peaceful era" and "disorder in the empire," abusively denouncing the newly rising landlord class dictatorship as "wanting in principle" and "disorder in the empire." He was after restoration of the "peaceful era" during the Hsia, Shang and Chou dynasties, aimed at "reviving states that have been extinguished, restoring families whose line of succession has been broken, and calling to office those who have fallen into obscurity."

The vast numbers of the slaves were the grave-diggers to bury the state based on the slave system. In their struggles they first criticized the view of the state held by the slave-owning class. Liuhsia Chih, leader of a slave uprising, snubbed Confucius and denounced his teachings of "Heavenly mandate," "Heavenly kingdom" and "son of Heaven" as nothing but deceit and trickery. He was of the opinion that society did not remain unchanged all the time and that the state had not come into being a long time ago. "In ancient times there were more beasts than men." By "Shen-nung's time," the people "mingled with the deer, farming for food and weaving for clothes without any intention to harm each other." The circumstance in which "the strong bullied the weak" and "the multitude terrorized the few" did not occur until after Huang-ti's time. Liuhsia Chih perceived that the states based on the slave system were languishing and believed they would be replaced by a new state structure. He was the first hero among the people who used the concept concerning the development of history to trace the beginnings of the state.

By the time history entered the Warring States period, the newly rising landlord class, propelled by the slave uprisings and representing the new relations of production, had won victories in the states of Han, Chao, Wei, Ch'i and Ch'in. This forcefully shattered the myth regarding the lasting immutability of states based on the system of slavery. On the question concerning the inception and evolution of states, Mencius ranted about the slave owners' states as being a "gift of Heaven" when desperately attacking the newly rising landlord class dictatorship. He looked upon the dictatorship exercised by the slave owners of the Shang-Chou period as the exemplification of what ideal states should be. Bemoaning the present in contrast to the past, he clamored for "following the examples of early kings." As an outstanding revolutionist of the newly rising landlord class, Shang Yang viewed differently from his Confucian contemporaries the major social upheavals and radical reorganization of society and resources brought about by the slave uprisings. After observing the effects of the revolutionary storm on society and summing up his observations, he broke away from threadbare Confucian teachings and established his own theoretical position among the classical schools of thought. His chapter on Stratagems reflects his views on the question concerning the beginnings of the state.

After tracing the different stages of development in Chinese history to remote antiquity, Shang Yang made some observations on the early primitive society in which people depended on hunting for their survival. When society entered into the Shen-nung period, farming was encouraged so the people could provide themselves with food and clothing, the administration of subjects being achieved without having to resort to punishments and the leader or "monarch" coming into being without fighting. This explained the circumstances of the latter stage of primitive society following the introduction of agriculture and the advent of the clan system. As the productive forces at the time remained low there was no surplus in production and the gulf between the rich and the poor and class antagonisms were hardly discernible. Shang Yang believed that the state came into

being after the Shen-nung period when there was disorder in society. To quell "disorder," Huang-ti came forward. He established the state in accordance with the needs of a new historical period. Since then there was the "duty between the ruler and his ministers, and the relations between father and son and duties between brothers."

Although Shang Yang regarded the "sages" as having propelled history forward in his theory of the origins of the state, he had neither transcended the limits of the idealist conception of history nor correctly interpreted the beginnings of the state. However, he recognized that the state had not come into being all by itself but was the product of the development of human society to a certain historical stage. He had perceived that the state came into being as a result of "disorder," the consequence of violence. This view was a brilliant one. From the way Shang Yang expounded the beginnings of the state, we can see traces of the links between the Legalists and the slave uprisings, indicating that the former were following the tide of the development of history on the foundation of the slave uprisings and in the service of establishing and consolidating the landlord class dictatorship.

II

The state is a tool of class struggle, being characterized by the exercise of dictatorship by the ruling classes over the other classes. It is "organized violence in which one class oppresses another." (Communist Manifesto) All the decayed and declining exploiting classes and their agents, in ancient and modern times and in China and elsewhere, have invariably used various fallacies and tried every means to cover up and obliterate this point. As a representative of the newly rising landlord class, Shang Yang was more outspoken than others in calling for a state machine that would establish and consolidate feudal landlord class dictatorship. He also called for the use of punishments internally and strengthening of the state against its rivals. This was to be accomplished in essence by violence and revolutions and the exercise of landlord class dictatorship, illustrating unambiguously the revolutionary vigor and the militant spirit of upholding the nascent landlord class administration during the ascending stage of the landlord class.

What Shang Yang meant by the "ordering of the state" by "severe punishments" that would restrain evil referred to the use of revolutionary violence by the newly rising landlord class to put down the counter-revolutionary violence of the slave-owning nobles before the state could be administered properly. What he meant by the "use of war to do away with war" implied waging just wars to counter unjust wars so as to end feudal divisions of power and make the vassals submissive. It was not merely accidental for Shang Yang to apply his crude dialectical ideas embodied in his advocacy of "using wars to do away with wars" and "using punishments to do away with punishments." It was the result of the circumstances of the time when the hard realities of the life-and-death class struggle between restoration and counter-restoration forced him to give utmost importance to and make full use of the landlord class dictatorship or

"organized violence." After the failure of the Wu Ch'i reform, the state of Ch'u was controlled by three slave-owning aristocratic clans, namely Chao, Ching and Chu. The state of Wei became strong as a result of the reforms introduced by Li Kuei. Regression, however, occurred after the emergence of the forces of the slave-owning nobles. In the case of the state of Ch'in, "the princes began to neglect Ch'in" following seizure by the state of Wei of large tracts of land west of the Yellow River. This caused the restoration-oriented slave-owning nobles in Ch'in to become assertive and to oppose the Shang Yang reform. They even conspired to put Shang Yang to death. Facts proved that the restorationist forces had so seriously encompassed the newly emerging feudal states at the time that it constituted a grave threat. Shang Yang's advocacy of "using wars to do away with wars" and "using punishments to do away with punishments" exactly embodied the revolutionary desire of the landlord class to exercise dictatorship, this being fully in accord with the demands of the times.

In his dissertations on law and government, Shang Yang held that "eradication of treachery" was a matter of paramount importance to the state. This clearly illustrated the class essence of the state regarding the exercise of dictatorship and its prime target. By "treacherous people" Shang Yang meant specifically the slave-owning nobility, big slave owners in industry and commerce and reactionary Confucianists who had stubbornly upheld the slave system, namely, "those who eat without work, who are glorified without going to war, who are honored without titles, who become rich without official emolument, and who grow powerful without holding government posts." This shows that Shang Yang was more or less correct in approving at that time the use of revolutionary violence and exercise of landlord class dictatorship.

Regarding the "eradication of treachery" Shang Yang had consistently called for severe punishments so as to strengthen the state and contribute to its well-being. He severely punished those nobles who persuaded the crown prince to break the law and put to death an aristocrat named Chu Huan who had infringed the newly promulgated laws. He suppressed more than 700 nobles who had plotted restoration along with those reactionary Confucianists who had followed them. To uproot those "trouble-makers" who had opposed the introduction of reforms from their entrenched nests, he banished them to frontier towns for reclamation of wasteland. By bringing into full play the functions of the state machinery based on landlord class dictatorship and resolutely suppressing the restorationist forces, Shang Yang was able to implement the reforms he had introduced to an extent that contributed to the establishment and consolidation of the landlord class dictatorship.

Shang Yang after all was a political representative of the landlord class. His knowledge of the functions of the state and the substance of the governing apparatus was invariably stamped with the brand of his time and class. While he called for the use of ruthless means against the restorationist forces of the slave-owning nobles in particular, he was likewise brutal in suppressing the working people. His use of "punishments to do away with punishments" was no better than dictatorship of one exploiting class in place of another, a dictatorship which could not possibly have been exercised over the overthrown slave-owning class in a complete and thorough manner.

III

Summing up the historical experience of the struggle between restoration and counter-restoration at a time when the feudal system had replaced the slave system, Shang Yang took the view that implementation of the government-by-law line would provide the key to consolidating the administration of the newly rising landlord class and bringing into full play the functions of the state machine of the landlord class. This view of government by law as the lifeblood of the landlord class administration was indeed profound. The forerunners who stressed the importance of government by law, such as Li Kuei and Wu Ch'i, were not as far-sighted as Shang Yang in their interpretations of rule by law. In Stratagems he spoke approvingly of the government-by-law line in terms of the feudal system, declaring that implementation of this line would contribute to the strengthening of the state against its rivals by concentrating power affording greater centralized control. If "the state is without a set of clearly defined laws," he argued, then the slave-owning nobles would perpetrate misdeeds to the detriment of the state and "great disorder" would appear to doom the state.

Shang Yang defended government by law as practiced by the landlord class in place of government by virtue as espoused by the declining slave-owning nobles, declaring that this approach conformed to the basic trend in the development of Chinese history. While Confucius and Mencius preached "government by rules of propriety" or "benevolent government," both were geared to a reactionary line that moved in a direction not in accord with the historical tide, an approach that was aimed at preparing counter-revolutionary opinion in favor of restoring the slave system. Since the slave-owning class would not of its own accord bow out of the historical stage, a set of "clearly-defined laws" would perforce be more important to the newly rising landlord class than anything else.

To meet the needs of establishing and consolidating the landlord class government, Shang Yang proposed government by law as the criterion for judging the proper or improper ordering of the state. What he enunciated about the principles of government by law as the yardstick for taking measure of one's "words, deeds and actions" served as a biting criticism of Confucius' teachings on the rules of propriety as the outward embodiment of the highest moral virtues.

The nature of the state is determined by economic and class relations. The changing class relations of the state necessitates corresponding changes in the principle of laws. Both in principle and in practice Shang Yang adhered to laws and advocated rewarding those according to merit and punishing those according to their offense regardless of social rank. He declared those who achieved worthy deeds would be honored and those who did wrong things would be punished whether or not they were distant or near of relationship. Severe punishment, he said, would be meted out to those who disobeyed the imperial decrees and violated state prohibitions regardless of whether the offenders were ministers, generals, officials or commoners. This implied he was determined to

suppress those slave-owning nobles who dared to break the law, thereby renouncing the institutions of the slave society exempting senior officials from punishment and upholding the implementation of the government-by-law line.

Shang Yang's teachings produced profound influence upon later Legalist thinkers. Hsün Tzu, for instance, denounced Mencius' interpretation of "benevolent government" as an attempt to "deceive the stupid in the name of the early kings." Han Fei who synthesized all previous teachings of the Legalist thinkers condemned the traditional moral virtues of the slave system, such as "benevolence and righteousness," and "filial piety and brotherly duty," as the root-cause of "undermining the laws," "upsetting the administration" and "weakening the state." He did much to belie the vain talk of Confucian pretenders. His statement of the theoretical basis of the Legalist school brought Shang Yang's measures advocating government by law to their highest development, as embodied in a set of laws that contributed to the consolidation of the newly rising landlord class dictatorship. Ch'in Shih Huang who stressed the present rather than the past upheld Shang Yang's reform measures and put into practice the ideas propounded by Han Fei by unhesitantly putting down the rebellion of the slave-owning nobles who were bent on usurping power and restoring their privileges. It was Ch'in Shih Huang who established the first unified feudal empire in Chinese history based on the centralization of state authority. Facts have proved that without the use of revolutionary violence it would be impossible to set up a new state on the ruins of the old one.

All the reactionaries in history adopted the same approach. Big renegade Lin Piao treasured Confucian and Mencian teachings on "benevolent government" and "rule by virtue." When the people of the whole country were celebrating the 20th founding anniversary of the People's Republic of China on October 1, 1969, he hid himself in a dark corner muttering something like "Those who rely on virtue will prosper and those who rely on force will perish" to viciously attack proletarian dictatorship. In the "Outline of 'Project 571'," a counter-revolutionary armed coup plan dished up by Lin Piao and company, proletarian dictatorship is again maliciously branded as "autocracy" and "tyranny." Their clumsy performance tells us by negative example that proletarian dictatorship is a magic weapon for protecting our revolutionary people, and that the Party's basic line is the life-blood of proletarian dictatorship. We must follow Chairman Mao's teaching "Never give benevolent government to the reactionaries and the reactionary conduct of the reactionary classes" and struggle to consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat!

(The authors are young workers attached respectively to No. 3 Zone, Shanghai Port; Marshalling Yard, Shanghai Railway Sub-Bureau; and Shanghai Switch Works)

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Assessing Some Different Viewpoints on Li Chih's Thinking

(Hsüeh-hsi yü P'i-p'an [Study and Criticism], No. 12, December 14, 1974)

Articles carried in newspapers and journals throughout the country have commented on Li Chih (李贄) with different viewpoints. We have made some inferences for the reference of those who may want to delve into the subject.

(1) Concerning Li Chih's class identity

In looking at the question of Li Chih's class identity analytically, there is general agreement that there were first signs of capitalist stirrings at the time in which Li Chih lived. But in many articles there are different interpretations as to whether or not Li Chih's views reflected and represented such new relations of production.

One view identifies Li Chih as a "progressive thinker" "reflecting the grassroots strata's response to the first sign of capitalism in the Ming period." In an article discussing Li Chih's veneration for Legalism and opposition to Confucianism, Su Chen-yuan holds that Li Chih "was one of the forerunners in Chinese history opposed to feudal ideas." "Li Chih's ideas precisely reflected the new ideas of the grassroots strata during the Ming period when capitalist elements were beginning to take shape, playing a progressive role in history." "Li Chih in his life time was opposed to Confucius, to the school of reason and to feudalism, a life that demonstrated the spirit of going against the tide and of daring to break with traditional Confucian ideology." (Chekiang Jih-pao, June 20, 1974) In the article "Li Chih and Struggle To Revere Legalism and Oppose Confucianism," Liu Wei-hua said: "To a certain extent Li Chih's struggle to revere Legalism and oppose Confucianism was initially characterized by its destructive impact on the feudal system, becoming the forerunner of a movement with democratic elements that appeared during the 17th and 18th centuries to oppose the feudal teachings of rationalism." (P'o Yü Li, No. 3 1974) In the article "On Li Chih's Veneration for Legalism and Opposition to Confucianism," Fu En pointed out: "Li Chih lived at a time when the institution of the feudal society was decaying and when new elements of capitalism were beginning to make themselves felt. ....During the Ming period in particular which saw the accelerated development of industry and commerce along the coastal regions, the yearnings for new capitalist relations of production within the feudal society encouraged the townspeople to make new political demands. This gradually led to a civic movement opposed to the yoke of feudal autocracy and fetters that would hamper the unrestricted development of industry and commerce." "Battling in a social environment under the sway of utterly dark and insidious forces....Li Chih incisively revealed and repudiated the hypocritical and reactionary nature of the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius as well as feudal conventions. This shows that the new ideas of the townspeople fostered by the first signs of capitalist influences during the Ming period had their progressive contributions to history." (Chieh-fang Jih-pao, April 13, 1974)

Another view holds that since Li Chih lived at a time when nascent capitalist influences were feeble Li Chih "still remained a member of the landlord class" and as such was representative of small and middle landowners. In the article "On Li Chih," Fan Shu-chih observed that the "first signs of capitalism then after all constituted but feeble economic rumblings which could not have changed the existing feudal relations of production as well as class relationships. Li Chih continued to be a member of the landlord class and appeared on the political stage as an ideological representative of the economically and politically lower strata among the landowner class." Although "he had the courage to denounce Confucius and Mencius by name and attack rationalistic philosophers in power," "the decline of the landlord class as a whole denied him any prospect in a feudal society. Failing to find any new ideological weapon, he had no choice but to oppose the Confucianists in the name of Confucianism, without trying to disavow Confucianism from its basic theoretical position. He was critical of the ills of the existing institution but failed to put forward anything new in its place. In his indecision and groping about, he had to seek emancipation from Buddhist scriptures." "It was no longer possible for him to display the same vigorous mental outlook that was demonstrated when the landlord class had just mounted the political stage." (Wen-hui Pao, October 27, 1974)

Still another view holds that Li Chih, as "reformist of the landlord class," had "to a certain extent given expression to the demands of the townspeople." In the article "Li Chih's Educational Ideas Opposed to Feudal Tradition,"Ch'en Pen-ming asserted that "as a reformist of the landlord class, Li Chih was a 'rebel' that had fought his way out of the Confucian camp." "His thinking was more or less acceptable to the rank and file. ....He was in sympathy with the traders and his references to the heroes and stalwarts of Liangshan Po demonstrated that his notions to a certain extent reflected the interests, aspirations and demands of the townspeople and those of the lower strata." (Fu-chien Shih-ta, No. 2, 1974) An article on Li Chih carried in the Tientsin Jih-pao of June 18, 1974 likewise identified him as "a reformist within the landlord class" and held that "his thinking to a certain extent reflected the aspirations and demands of the rising townspeople at a time when the first signs of capitalism were noticeable." In an article identifying Li Chih as "a progressive thinker" who "revered Legalism and opposed Confucianism," Ch'ing Ssu analyzed the class relations in society during the reign of Chia-ching of the Ming period and pointed out: "With the advent of the first signs of capitalism the townspeople likewise began to battle against feudal oppressions, the struggle between reform and conservatism becoming most acute in the ideological sphere. A number of progressive elements from within the landlord class expressed dissatisfaction with the existing state of affairs and called for reform. Boldly turning against the philosophical orthodoxy of feudalism, they agitated for ideological emancipation. This enabled Li Chih to concentrate his repudiation on the Confucian school of thought represented by Confucius and to applaud the Legalist school without reservations. In terms of depth and breadth, his opposition to Confucianism and veneration for Legalism had surpassed that of all progressive thinkers before him, this being closely linked with the social and historical conditions

which had then prevailed, that is, the state of political and economic development cited above." "Thus Li Chih's thinking to a certain extent reflected the demands and aspirations of the rising townspeople at a time when the first signs of capitalism began to manifest themselves." (Jen-min Jih-pao, June 13, 1974)

Still some others held that Li Chih was representative of those small and middle landowners and the rising townspeople. In the article "Briefly About Li Chih," Yeh Hsien-en analytically traced the advent and development of the first signs of capitalism in the mid-Ming period, focusing on Li Chih's family background and the influence of social ferment on him. He wrote, "Li Chih was a native of Chuanchow in Fukien, then an important trading port with access to other countries. Overseas traders gathered at Chuanchow first before proceeding to the interior. For several generations Li Chih's ancestors were engaged in trade with other coastal territories, occasionally serving as interpreters or emissaries. They had traveled to Japan, the Ryukyus and the South Seas, as far as western Asia. Only Li Chih's father turned to teaching as a profession. Li Chih was thus brought up in a family of such a background, later mounting the historical stage as a representative of small and middle landowners and the rising townspeople. Holding aloft the banner of revering Legalism and opposing Confucianism, he fought against Confucianism and the rationalism represented by Yen Sung and Keng Ting." (Nan-fang Jih-pao, November 7, 1974)

(2) Concerning Li Chih's philosophy

This question is largely controversial, with these points at issue.

1. It is associated with "simple materialist and dialectical notions." In his article on Li Chih's philosophy and "fighting spirit," Chung Wen-sheng pointed out: "Li Chih's views on simple materialism and progressive egalitarianism were likewise strongly critical of the 'theory of innate genius' and 'Heavenly mandate theory' trumpeted by the Confucianists." (Nanking University Journal, No. 2, 1974) In a similar article on Li Chih's "fighting spirit," P'eng Chün commented: "Although he had certain materialist leanings he had not and could not possibly have attained the state of historical materialism." (Kwangtung Normal College Journal, No. 2, 1974) Another article on Li Chih was carried in the Tientsin Jih-pao with this observation: "Theoretically Li Chih was also critical of idealist rationalism. He wrote about married couples to refute the fallacy spread by the adherents of the school of reason which interpreted li (理) or principle as the "Great Ultimate," from which all being derives. Li Chih, however, viewed the countless phenomena of existence as having been derived from the universe, ...explaining that Li Chih's thinking was nearly close to being materialist and dialectical." (Tientsin Jih-pao, June 18, 1974)

2. Li Chih was regarded as having "a rather strong touch of idealism." According to the observation of the Writing Group, Department of History, Amoy University, "Due to class limitations of his time, Li Chih's philosophy had its limitations," "giving rise to a rather strong sense of

idealism. He advocated freedom of thinking and free exercise of the mind but rejected the objectivity of truth. This made him slide into the doctrine of relativity." (Fukien Jih-pao, May 22, 1974) Another article on Li Chih and his repudiation of Confucianism by the Mass Criticism Group, CCP Huangkang District Committee, also viewed the "ideological weapon" used by Li Chih to "oppose the Confucian and Mencian idealist conception of history as idealist. His A Child's Talk (童心说) is naturally against following exactly what Confucius had taught but it fails to produce a set of criteria distinguishing right from wrong and demonstrating the correctness of the law of historical development. In the end he could not even free himself from the track of subjective idealism." The article went on: "Failing to see any way out, he attempted to find the answer from Buddhist scriptures in the hope that the 'wisdom' of 'Buddha' would 'guide' him to the other 'shore.' However, Li Chih's adoption of Buddhist garb was only an overt expression of the trend of the times toward an easy syncretism of Buddhist mysticism and subjective idealism and Confucianism, thereby making it virtually impossible for him to reach the other 'shore'." (Hupeh Jih-pao, November 9, 1974) In annotating Li Chih's work "Appraisal of Historical Figures Over the Ages, Hidden Books" (藏书·世纪列传总目前论), the Workers Theoretical Study Group of the Foochow No. 2 Chemical Works and the worker-peasant-soldier students of the Department of Chinese, Fukien Normal University concluded that Li Chih was "more strongly influenced by the subjective idealist philosophy of Wang Yang-ming and Buddhist teachings with the result that he leaned strongly in the direction of idealism." (Fukien Shih-ta, No. 3, 1974)

3. Still some others took the view that Li Chih's philosophy had finally "slid into dualism." Commented Yeh Hsien-en: Li Chih "on the one hand raised his simple materialist point of view to affirm a theory that considers reality to consist of two irreducible elements or modes, that is, a doctrine that the universe is under the dominion of two opposing principles one of which is good and the other evil. His repudiation of Confucianism and rationalistic metaphysics and references to Legalism and Ch'in Shih Huang in laudatory terms followed the metaphysical approach and therefore lacked conviction and tended to become contradictory. This was closely related to the period in which Li Chih lived, a time marked by the decline of the feudal society and the first signs heralding the advent of capitalism as well as the landowning and mercantile strata he represented. This strata's contradictory approach to Confucianism such as opposing Confucian endorsement of the feudal system while at the same time identifying themselves with the class interests upheld by the Confucianists became the class foundation of Li Chih's sliding into dualism." (Chungshan University Journal, No. 3, 1974)

(Collated by Yen Ch'ing延青)

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